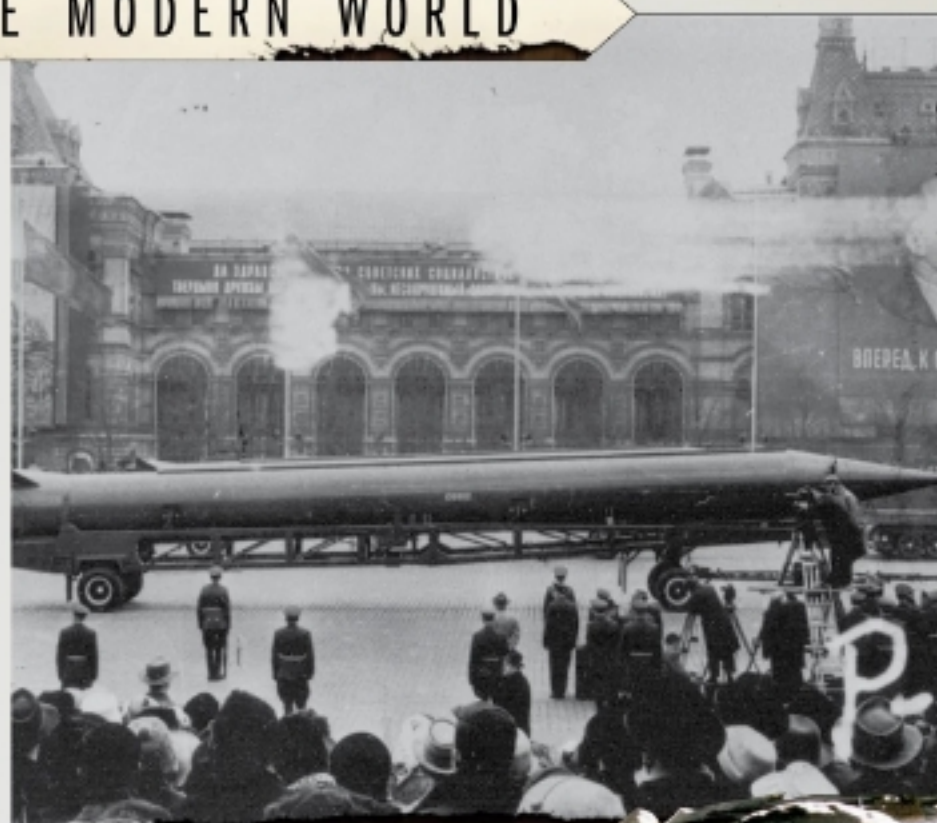


NEW  
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DISCOVER THE CONFLICT THAT DEFINED THE MODERN WORLD



■ THE ADVENT OF THE ATOMIC BOMB USHERS IN A NEW ERA OF WARFARE



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# COLD WAR



■ NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV AND FIDEL CASTRO MEET IN THE USSR



■ PRESIDENT JOHN F. KENNEDY SIGNS A PROCLAMATION ENACTING THE US ARMS QUARANTINE ON CUBA



■ A MISSILE-LADEN SOVIET CARGO SHIP IS MONITORED BY A US NAVY PATROL AIRCRAFT

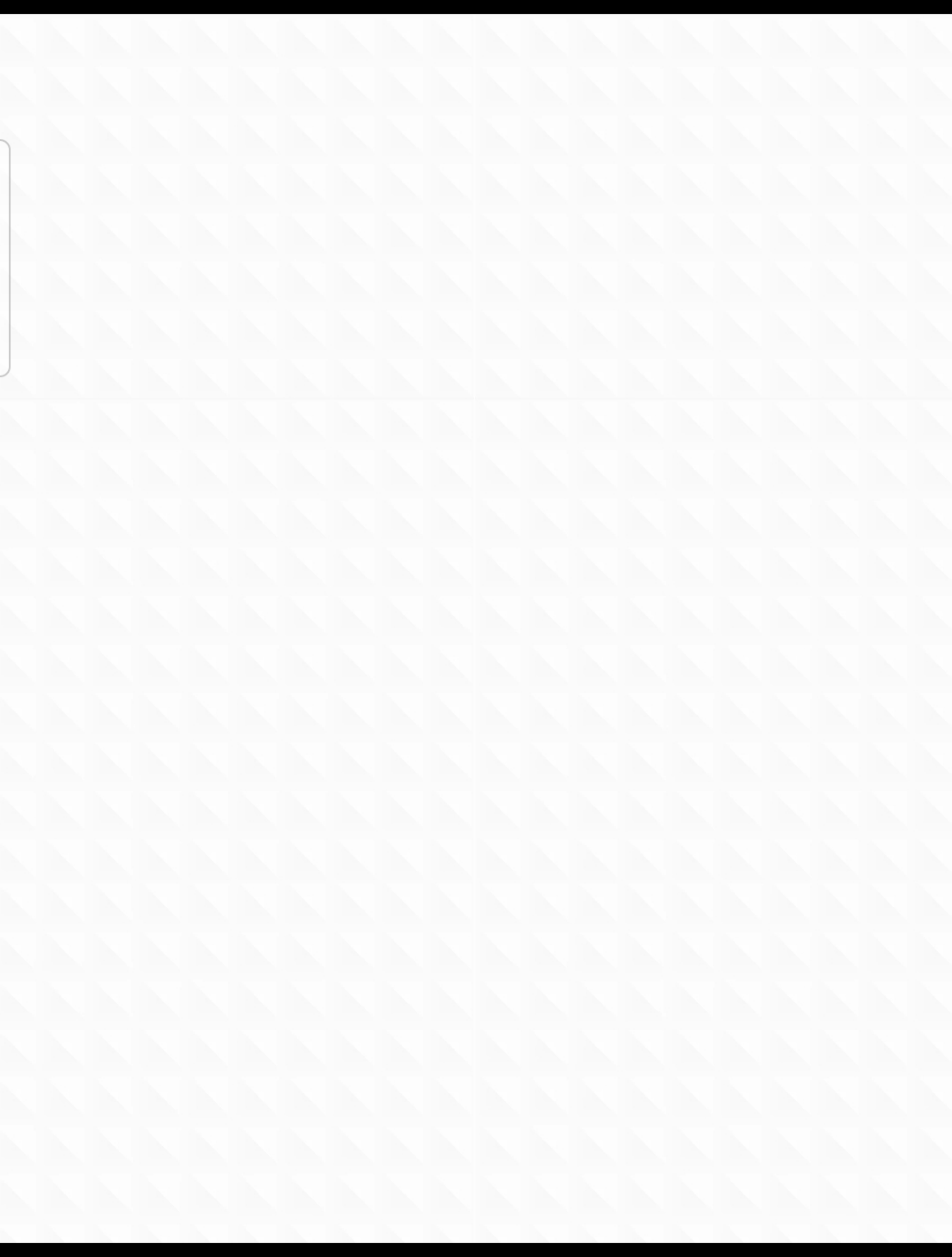
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STALIN - VIETNAM WAR - SPACE RACE - JFK - BERLIN WALL - & MORE







**HISTORY  
of  
WAR**

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# COLD WAR

Over a period of decades, from the close of the Second World War to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, the Cold War came to define the latter half of the 20th century. A conflict unlike any that had come before it, the Cold War's battlegrounds were as much in the hearts and minds of citizens around the world as they were in the myriad combat zones that stretched from Vietnam to Cuba. The warring ideologies of the West and the East, led by their respective superpowers, brought the world to the brink of total annihilation on more than one occasion, and gave rise to some of the most iconic political figures in world history. In the History of War Book of the Cold War we explore the most fascinating events of this iconic conflict, from the origins of the Iron Curtain, to the Cuban Missile Crisis and the fall of the Berlin Wall. Delve into the Cold War like never before, through stunning photography, expert commentary and eyewitness accounts.





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# HISTORY of WAR

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# COLD WAR

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Willenhall, West Midlands, WV13 3XT

Distributed by Marketforce, 5 Churchill Place, Canary Wharf, London, E14 5HU  
[www.marketforce.co.uk](http://www.marketforce.co.uk) Tel: 0203 787 9001

History of War Book of the Cold War Fourth Edition  
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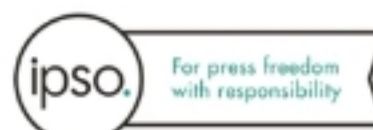


Future plc is a public  
company quoted on the  
London Stock Exchange  
(symbol: FUTR)  
[www.futureplc.com](http://www.futureplc.com)

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**HISTORY  
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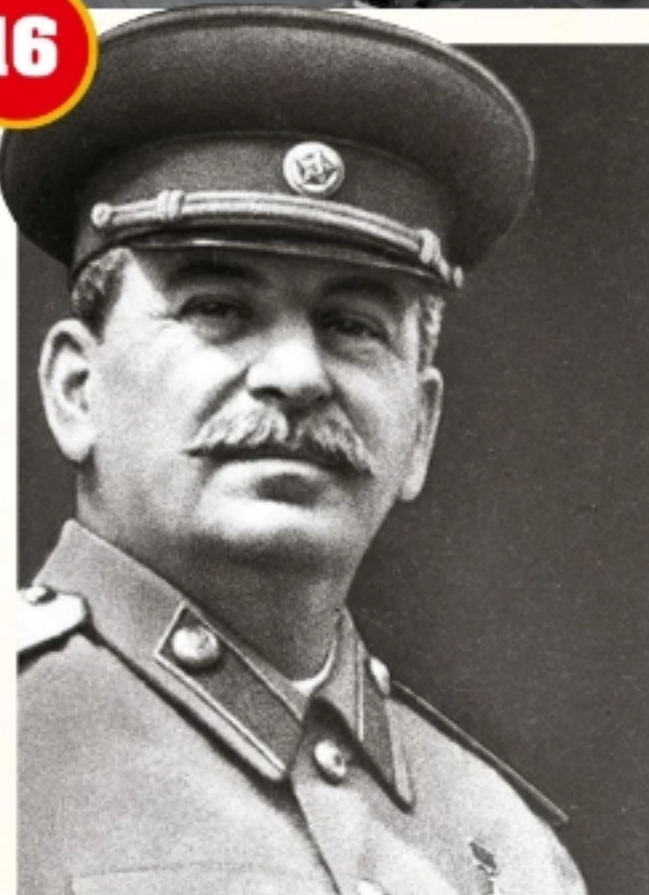
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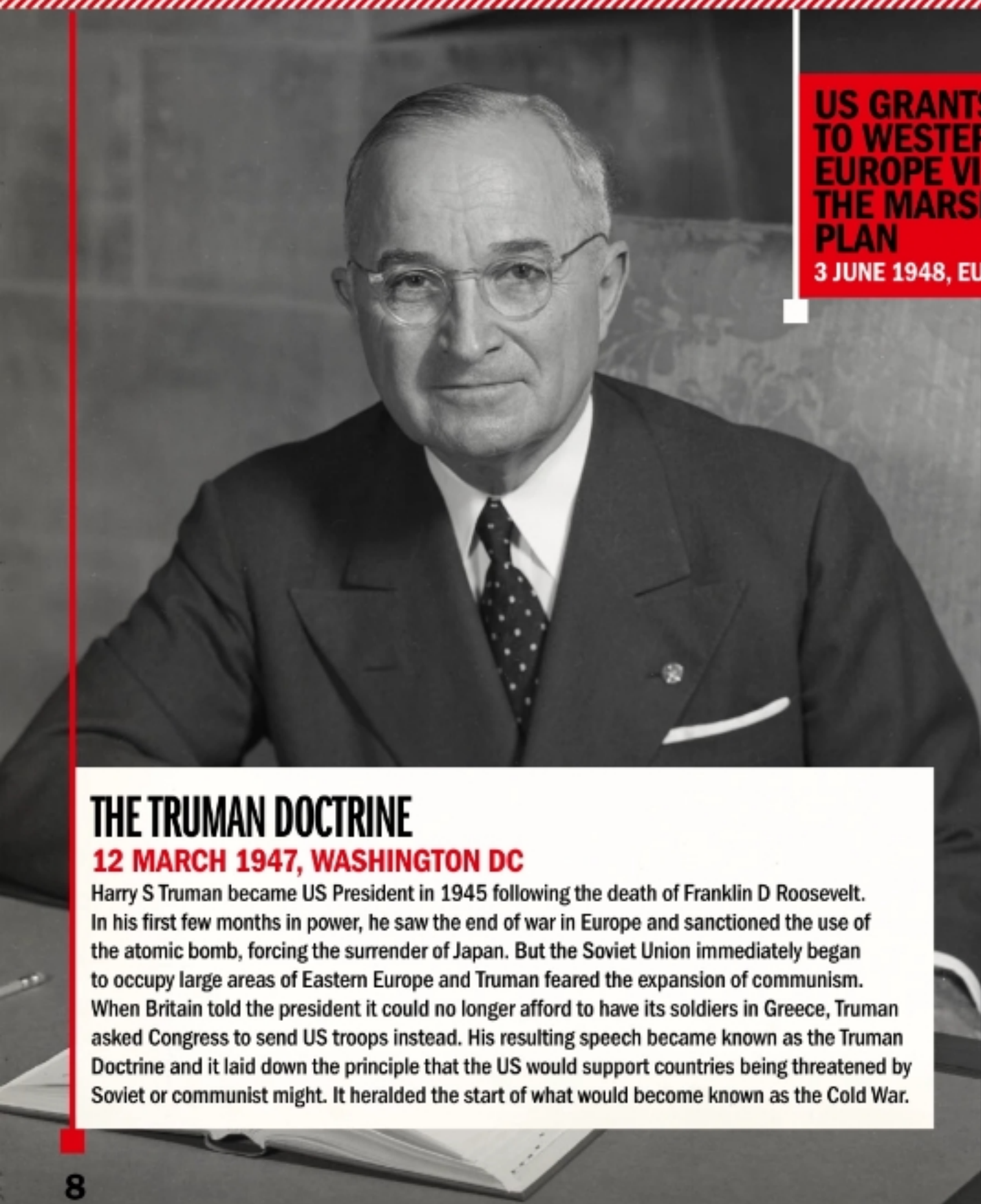


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# FROZEN IN TIME: KEY EVENTS OF THE COLD WAR

FOR 44 YEARS, THE USA AND USSR HAD A FROSTY  
RELATIONSHIP THAT SPLIT THE WORLD IN TWO AND TOOK IT TO  
THE BRINK OF NUCLEAR WAR

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**US GRANTS AID  
TO WESTERN  
EUROPE VIA  
THE MARSHALL  
PLAN**  
**3 JUNE 1948, EUROPE**

## THE TRUMAN DOCTRINE

**12 MARCH 1947, WASHINGTON DC**

Harry S Truman became US President in 1945 following the death of Franklin D Roosevelt. In his first few months in power, he saw the end of war in Europe and sanctioned the use of the atomic bomb, forcing the surrender of Japan. But the Soviet Union immediately began to occupy large areas of Eastern Europe and Truman feared the expansion of communism. When Britain told the president it could no longer afford to have its soldiers in Greece, Truman asked Congress to send US troops instead. His resulting speech became known as the Truman Doctrine and it laid down the principle that the US would support countries being threatened by Soviet or communist might. It heralded the start of what would become known as the Cold War.

## THE BERLIN BLOCKADE

**24 JUNE 1948 – 12 MAY 1949, BERLIN**

Immediately following the war, the Allies split both Germany and Berlin into four temporary occupation zones. But in 1948, the US, Britain and France decided to combine their sectors and create a capitalist country called West Germany. They introduced the Deutsche Mark as the new legal tender which also became the standard currency in Berlin. This angered the Soviets and in response, Joseph Stalin called a halt to all rail and road travel from West Germany to West Berlin. He hoped this would leave the city stranded and starved, pushing it to surrender. But he didn't bank on the Allies sending supplies by plane instead. Over the course of the 318-day blockade, around 1.5 million tons of goods were transported on more than 275,000 flights. After Stalin lifted the blockade, the Federal Republic of Germany was declared in the West, with the German Democratic Republic in the East.





## KOREAN WAR

**25 JUNE 1950 – 27 JULY 1953, KOREA**

When World War II ended, Korea was divided into two, with the Soviets and China controlling the north and the US controlling the south. North Korean leader Kim Il-Sung wanted to unite the two halves and, with the support of Russia and China, his soldiers invaded South Korea in 1950. This galvanised a response from the United Nations, which sent troops led by the US to push the invading army back. But communist China joined the war, resulting in a further two-and-a-half years of fighting along the dividing line between the two countries. It was effectively a battle between capitalism and communism which ended in a truce. President Dwight D Eisenhower had threatened to use any force necessary – including nuclear weapons – if a peace deal could not be brokered.



## JOSEPH STALIN DIES OF A MASSIVE HEART ATTACK

**5 MARCH 1953, KUNTSEVO, USSR**

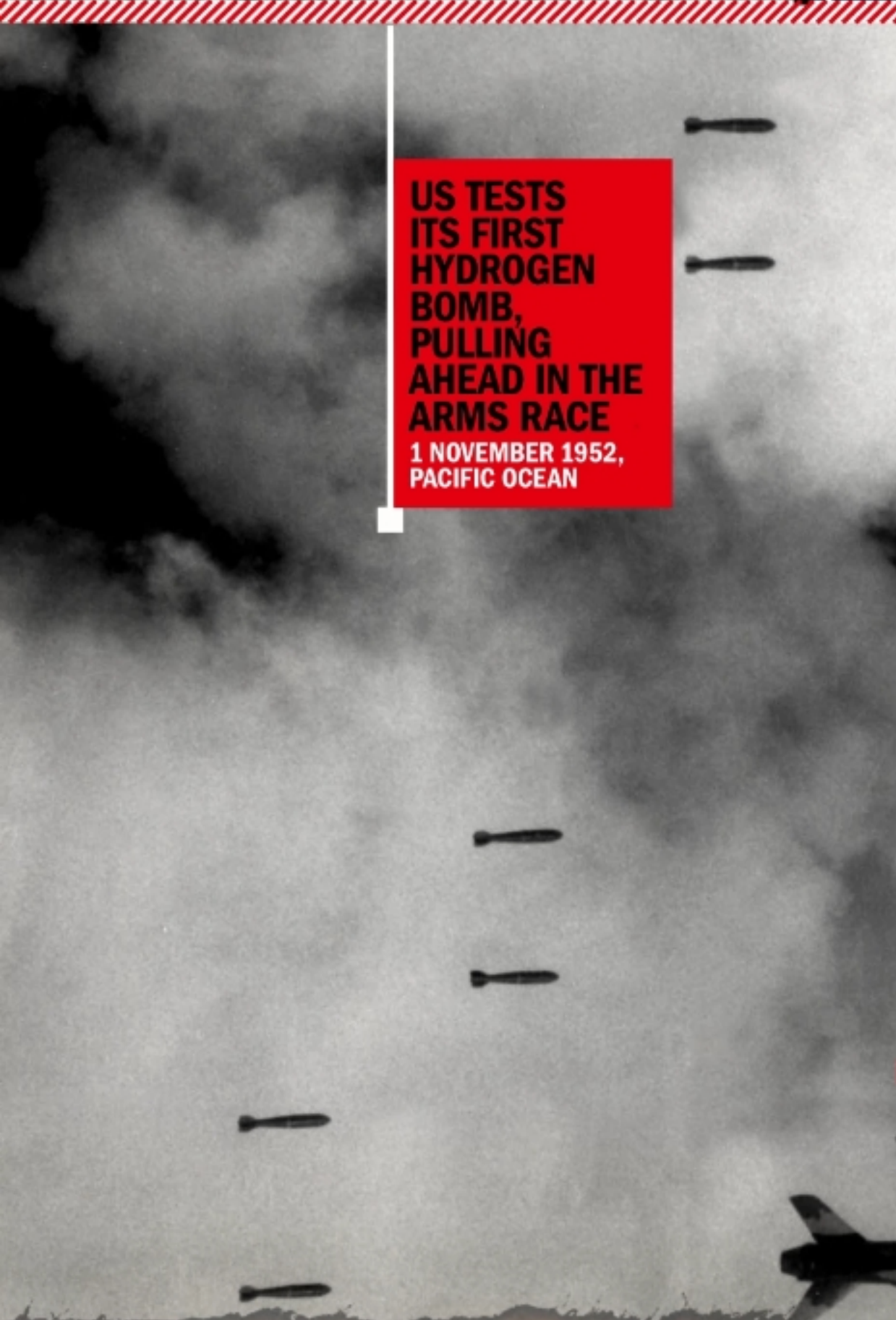


## START OF THE SPACE RACE

**4 OCTOBER 1957**

The United States had long believed that Soviet technology was years behind its own, so to say it was surprised when the USSR launched a satellite into space is an understatement. Sputnik 1 became the first artificial Earth satellite and sparked a long-running space race which would see the USA eventually declare an ambition to put a man on the moon. There was also a fear that the Soviets would be able to use their long-range rocket technology to attack America with nuclear weapons. Many millions of dollars were spent fighting this technological front of the Cold War, but the USA eventually won when astronaut Neil Armstrong set foot on the moon in 1969.

**US TESTS ITS FIRST HYDROGEN BOMB, PULLING AHEAD IN THE ARMS RACE**  
**1 NOVEMBER 1952, PACIFIC OCEAN**



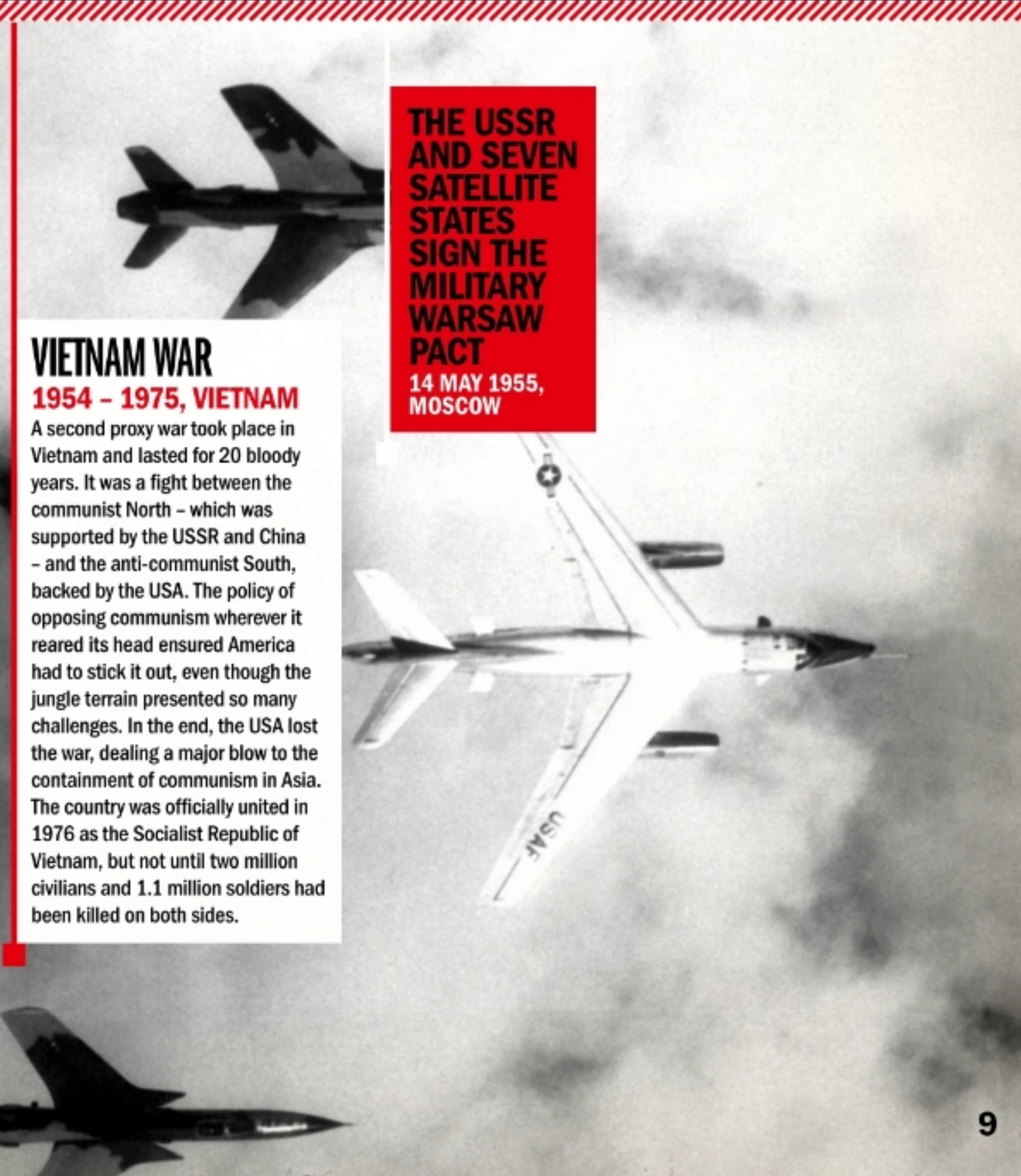
## VIETNAM WAR

**1954 – 1975, VIETNAM**

A second proxy war took place in Vietnam and lasted for 20 bloody years. It was a fight between the communist North – which was supported by the USSR and China – and the anti-communist South, backed by the USA. The policy of opposing communism wherever it reared its head ensured America had to stick it out, even though the jungle terrain presented so many challenges. In the end, the USA lost the war, dealing a major blow to the containment of communism in Asia. The country was officially united in 1976 as the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, but not until two million civilians and 1.1 million soldiers had been killed on both sides.

**THE USSR AND SEVEN SATELLITE STATES SIGN THE MILITARY WARSAW PACT**

**14 MAY 1955, MOSCOW**





**A UNITED STATES U-2 SPY PLANE IS SHOT DOWN IN SOVIET AIRSPACE**

**1 MAY 1960, NEAR ARAMIL, USSR**

## BUILDING OF THE BERLIN WALL

**13 AUGUST 1961, BERLIN**

Between 1949 and 1961, about 2.5 million East Germans escaped to West Berlin or West Germany, a situation which was highly embarrassing for both the USSR and its claims that communism was an attractive way of life. Combined with a fear that West Berlin was being used as a spy centre by the Americans, this was enough for Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev to ask the US to leave the city. When it became clear this wasn't going to happen, Khrushchev ordered the border between East and West Berlin be closed. Overnight, the German Democratic Republic erected a physical barrier around West Berlin, cutting it off by land. A permanent 'Anti-Fascist Protective Wall' was then built, which became a powerful symbol of the divide between the Cold War rivals. Although West Germans could apply for a permit and travel to the East, the same rights were not afforded to the East Germans – and 191 of them died trying to cross the Wall.

**THE US, UK AND USSR SIGN THE LIMITED NUCLEAR TEST BAN TREATY**

**5 AUGUST 1963, MOSCOW**

**ANTI-SOVIET REBELLIONS ARE VIOLENTLY QUASHED IN POLAND AND HUNGARY**

**1956, POLAND AND HUNGARY**

## THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS

**16 OCTOBER – 28 OCTOBER 1962, CUBA**

The world was brought to the brink of an apocalyptic nuclear war as the Cold War took a frightening turn. The revolutionary leader Fidel Castro had ruled Cuba since 1959, but his decision to nationalise US factories and plantations led Washington to impose an economic embargo which prompted Castro to turn to the USSR for assistance. The Russians developed missile sites on Cuban soil within range of most of the USA and they were ready to arm them with nuclear ammunition. The sites were spotted by US spy planes and resulted in America moving swiftly to blockade Cuba with naval ships to prevent the Soviets from delivering the arms. This led to a lengthy standoff which had the world on edge. As American planes flew overhead, armed with nuclear bombs, and the Russian ships sailed closer, the US began preparing for an invasion of Cuba. To the relief of the world, Russia blinked first, agreeing to turn back if America promised not to invade. The US also agreed in secret to remove the missiles it had located in Turkey.



## NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY IS SIGNED

**1 JULY 1968, NEW YORK**

It was agreed that the spread of nuclear technology needed to be stemmed and so the USA and the USSR signed an agreement that would prevent its proliferation. This was largely a self-serving move since the cost of nuclear arms development was proving to be rather costly for both sides, but when it came into effect on 1 March 1970 it was nevertheless widely applauded. Under its terms, countries with nuclear weapons pledged not to sell or hand them to non-nuclear countries and it has since become an important agreement that has been signed by most countries possessing nuclear arms.

## CZECHOSLOVAKIA GAINS TEMPORARY FREEDOM FROM THE USSR

**5 APRIL 1968 – 21 AUGUST 1968, CZECHOSLOVAKIA**

## NIXON VISITS CHINA FOLLOWING ITS ADMISSION TO THE UN

**21 FEBRUARY 1972 – 28 FEBRUARY 1972, CHINA**



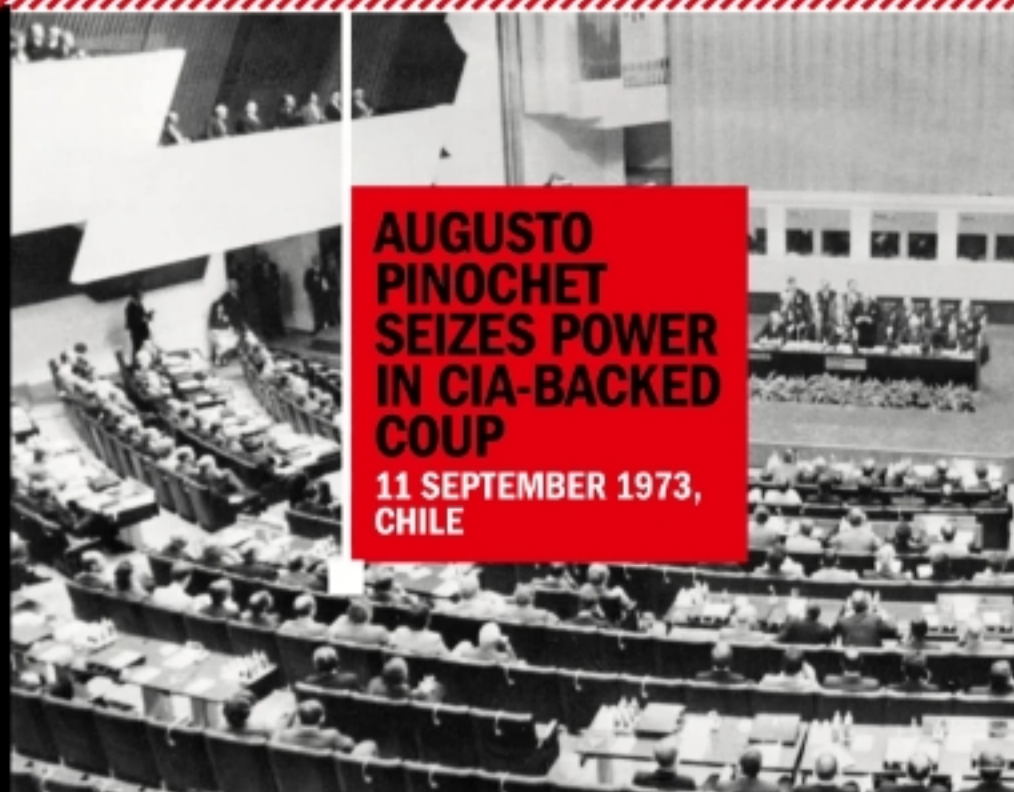
## THE BREZHNEV DOCTRINE

**12 NOVEMBER 1968, WARSAW**

The Soviet leader Leonid Brezhnev delivered a speech in which he emphasised the USSR's grip on the countries behind the Iron Curtain. He said the USSR would be justified in invading any Eastern Bloc country which appeared to be a threat to the wider socialist group. It was intended to head off any future uprisings by threatening war and it also meant that the independence of the Soviet Union's satellite countries was limited. Since no country would be allowed to leave the Warsaw Pact, this consolidated the USSR's power and made it an even greater rival to the USA.

## AUGUSTO PINOCHET SEIZES POWER IN CIA-BACKED COUP

**11 SEPTEMBER 1973, CHILE**



## THE HELSINKI ACCORDS

**1 AUGUST 1975, HELSINKI**

The 1970s saw a thawing of the Cold War. In 1972, the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks placed restraints on the USSR's and the USA's central armaments and in 1975 there had even been a truce in the Space Race when Russia's Soyuz 19 and America's Apollo 18 docked. The Helsinki Accords of 1975 cemented Europe's borders, formed trade links between the two sides and gained a promise from the USSR to respect human rights. It boosted the spirit of détente, reducing tensions between the superpowers. The Moscow Helsinki Group was formed to monitor compliance – although members were threatened by the KGB.





## THE MOSCOW OLYMPICS

**19 JULY 1980 – 3 AUGUST 1980, MOSCOW**

Sport is often embroiled in politics and the Olympics are usually a good example of such things. Moscow was awarded the 1980 Olympic Games, but the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan resulted in the largest boycott in Olympic history. In total, 66 eligible countries decided not to attend (although it is feasible some pulled out for other reasons). Among those refusing to participate were the United States, Canada and West Germany, although notable exceptions among Western nations included the UK, France, Italy and Sweden. Eastern Bloc countries retaliated in 1984 by boycotting the Olympics in Los Angeles. It certainly highlighted the stark Cold War divisions.

**THE INTERMEDIATE-RANGE NUCLEAR FORCES TREATY FORSWears GROUND-LAUNCHED BALLISTIC AND CRUISE MISSILES WITH A RANGE BETWEEN 500 AND 5,500KM**

**8 DECEMBER 1987, WASHINGTON DC**



## THE SOVIET-AFGHAN WAR

**DECEMBER 1979 – FEBRUARY 1989, AFGHANISTAN**

For nine years, the Soviet Union became bogged down in a war between the Communist government of Afghanistan and insurgent rebel groups backed by the US. It was another proxy war which served to show that the tensions between the Cold War rivals were still very much at the surface, and it not only cost the USSR millions of roubles but kept tens of thousands of troops preoccupied in what was dubbed the USSR's Vietnam. Soviet forces were eventually pulled out by Mikhail Gorbachev when it became clear that it was a war the USSR just could not win. It is thought to have been a catalyst in the Soviet Union's eventual break-up.



## RONALD REAGAN BECOMES PRESIDENT

**20 JANUARY 1981 – 20 JANUARY 1989, WASHINGTON DC**

Former actor Ronald Reagan became the 40th President of the United States, and one of his first acts was to end détente. Dubbing the USSR an "evil empire" and calling for a rollback of communism to "write the final pages of the history of the Soviet Union", the Cold War was heightened under his reign. The firmly anti-communist leader devised the controversial Star Wars anti-missile program and he escalated the arms race, re-authorising the production of neutron warheads for the Lance missile. But he saw hope when Mikhail Gorbachev became leader of the USSR in 1985 and the pair met that November to seek a reduction in nuclear arms.







**THE BERLIN WALL FALLS  
AS THOUSANDS GATHER TO  
CELEBRATE THEIR NEW FREEDOM**  
9 NOVEMBER 1989, BERLIN

## THE COLD WAR ENDS

**25 DECEMBER 1991, USSR**

With Boris Yeltsin having been elected president of Russia in 1990 and with revolutions taking place across Eastern Europe, communism was dealt a huge blow. In 1990, Germany was reunified and in July 1991, the Warsaw Pact was dissolved. On 25 December 1991, George H W Bush received his best Christmas present: a telephone call from Yeltsin to formally recognise the end of the Cold War. On that day, the USSR was also on its way to being dissolved and its hammer and sickle was lowered over the Kremlin. Gorbachev resigned as president of the USSR and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) was formed.

## PERESTROIKA AND GLASNOST

**1985, USSR**

With Mikhail Gorbachev came *perestroika* – a restructuring of the Soviet Union's political and economic system by the Communist party – as well as *glasnost*, which was greater openness. Some within the party opposed such reforms, but it began to open up the USSR to international markets while retaining socialism as a principle. It also helped Gorbachev achieve his aim of allowing Russia to catch up with its Western counterparts. As such, it set in motion a feeling that change and prosperity was possible and a relaxation of the rules meant the USSR relied less on centralised planning. The satellite nations also began to feel more free in this new, partially mixed economy.





# COLD WAR ORIGINS

**16** Russia's ultimate tyrant: Stalin

**26** Seeds of the Cold War

**32** Key player: Harry S Truman

**24**



**32**





★  
**DESPITE THE WORLD WAR II VICTORY,  
LINGERING IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES  
BETWEEN WESTERN DEMOCRACIES AND THE  
SOVIET UNION SPAWNED A FROSTY STAND-OFF**  
★





# RUSSIA'S ULTIMATE TYRANT: STALIN

DESPISED BY MANY BUT IDOLISED BY HIS ADORING PUBLIC, STALIN DYED THE SOVIET UNION RED WITH ONE OF THE MOST BRUTAL AND BLOODY REGIMES IN HISTORY

**B**orn the son of a poor cobbler in an illiterate family, Ioseb Besarionis Dze Jugashvili seemed an unlikely person to one day become the dictator of the juggernaut that was the Soviet Union. Young Ioseb had been born at a time of massive change. In his lifetime, the Tsars, who had ruled Russia for countless generations, would be thrown off the throne – a seismic shift in Russian society that would

grant this poor boy from Georgia the chance to claim ultimate power.

Stalin himself played little part in the famous revolution of October 1917, and it wasn't until the Russian Civil War of 1917 to 1921 that his commitment and organisation skills caught Lenin's attention and catapulted him through the ranks. After acquiring a taste of power, Stalin wanted more and so aligned himself with the ailing Soviet leader. As Lenin's imminent death loomed, Stalin, who was now general

secretary, used his tenacity and cunning to ensure everything was in place for his rapid rise to power. His opposition were ejected from the party, the Soviet Union and eventually lost their lives. Obsessed with ensuring his rule remained unquestioned, Stalin purged anyone who dared question his authority. Soon all who remained were the few who were fiercely loyal, and the many who were terrified into obedience. Stalin's ruthlessness had won him the ultimate prize – the Soviet Union was his.



## RISE TO POWER

Three key reasons for the rise of the man of steel

### LINKS WITH LENIN

When Lenin went into semi-retirement, Stalin acted as his intermediary with the outside world, with unprecedented access to the ailing leader. Stalin used this to his advantage after his death, elevating Lenin to a godlike figure and he as his loyal disciple.

### POLITICAL ALLIANCES

Stalin was able to set up an alliance with key figures within the Communist Party and replace enemies with those loyal to him. Because of this Lenin's Testament, a document written by Lenin that called for Stalin's dismissal, was prevented from being revealed.

### REIGN OF TERROR

Stalin was able to isolate and eject any members of the party who did not agree with him. This later turned into a brutal regime of incarcerations and executions and the resulting atmosphere of fear ensured his authority would not be questioned.



■ Stalin's legacy is one of history's most complex. He remains arguably the most significant leader of the 20th century





## THE GREAT PURGE

Opponents of Stalin were targeted in a reign of terror that left over a million dead

It is a cold winter's night in 1937. A black van screeches to a halt on a dark and silent street. A small group of men emerge from the car, their sloping rimmed hats silhouetted against the dim light of the flickering streetlamps; their heavy guns swinging at their sides. One casually flicks open a notebook as another lights his pipe and takes a long drag. With a word and gesture to a nearby house the group move as one. The ground crunches under the thick soles of their leather boots as they climb the steps and knock sharply on the door.

One flicks open the letterbox and screams harsh words through the small gap and eventually the door opens and a pale face appear. One of the men kicks the door open and the group storm through the house, flinging open doors and destroying anything in their path. A moment later they emerge into the street again, dragging with them a terrified young man who clings to his father. The older man's face is pale but stern, his jaw clenched. His silence is louder than his son's panicked pleas and cries.

The men continue their raid, storming through houses until eventually the entire street is full of men from 17 to 70, some dazed, others hysterical and some with that same strange haunting silence. As the guards point their guns and usher them into the van there is no word of explanation and the few who protest are beaten. As the door closes and the vehicle disappears into the night, those who remain return silently to their homes.

These were not the first victims of the terror that would come to be known as the Great Purge, and they would not be the last. These raids in the dead of night were not the work of a secret terrorist organisation, but the government, and there was no redemption awaiting these victims, only imprisonment, torture, forced confessions and execution.

Obtaining ultimate power was not enough for Stalin. Controlled by his incredible paranoia, suddenly everyone became a suspect in conspiring to overthrow his rule. The purge began when Sergey Kirov, a staunch Stalinist, was murdered in 1934. Stalin used his assassination as evidence that there was a plot against him and launched the operation. But it is thought by some that Stalin himself arranged the death of the well-liked politician whose popularity threatened his rule. This began the string of witch-hunts that went on to claim millions of innocent lives.

The purges first struck former senior Communist Party leaders in the famous Moscow Trials. These trials were covered by the Western media, who saw no problem with the guilty verdicts as the accused admitted to their crime of conspiring to assassinate Stalin. However, behind closed doors confessions were being beaten out of the accused with mental and physical torture, threats against families and assurances that their lives would be spared if they pleaded guilty. They were not.



★  
**THESE RAIDS IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT WERE NOT THE WORK OF A SECRET TERRORIST ORGANISATION, BUT THE GOVERNMENT**  
 ★

The purge then extended to the army, writers, artists, 'wealthy' farmers and eventually anyone who could be rounded up to make up the numbers of the 'minimum arrests' needed by the NKVD, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs. Headed by Nikolai Yezhov, the NKVD troika were vicious courts of three people who would issue sentences without a full trial. Through this they could achieve assembly line-style executions of up to a thousand people per day. Eventually the purge extended to the Communist Party itself, as almost all the Bolsheviks who had taken part in the 1917 Revolution were destroyed and erased from history, until the only original member who remained was Stalin.

From 1937 to 1938 some 1.2 million people met their death as a result of the purge. After his death, 357 lists were found bearing Stalin's signature, authorising the executions of some 40,000 people. His calculated approach is evident in a line that he reportedly muttered while reviewing one such list; "Who's going to remember this riff-raff in ten or 20 years' time? No one. Who remembers the names now of the boyars Ivan the Terrible got rid of? No one."



■ Many official images were edited to remove victims of the Great Purge

## MOST WANTED

Three senior officials who found themselves on Stalin's hit list

### LEON TROTSKY



**Position:** Head of the Fourth International  
**Crime:** Firmly opposed to Stalin as the leader of the Soviet Union

**Fate:** Assassinated on Stalin's orders on 21 August 1940

### NIKOLAI YEZHOV



**Position:** Head of the NKVD  
**Crime:** Theft of government funds, homosexuality, collaboration with German spies

**Fate:** Arrested & shot on 4 February 1940

### NIKOLAI BUKHARIN



**Position:** General secretary of Comintern's executive committee  
**Crime:** Treasonous conspiracy to overthrow the state

**Fate:** Arrested and executed on 15 March 1938





## LENIN V STALIN

Lenin's vision was a society run by the people for the people, with all resources shared equally. He wished to completely eradicate the idea of bourgeoisie (a social order ruled by the wealthy) and believed the power of the state would eventually fade away.

### COMMUNISM

He used communism to further his own power and believed Russia would thrive with a powerful leader. He wished to eliminate the bourgeoisie, as well as any resistance of the working class, using state violence to do so.

National borders were deemed outdated and Lenin believed the world should engage in a unified revolution. He wished to spread communism across the planet and envisioned a merger of all nations and the creation of a world state.

### FOREIGN POLICY

An advocate of 'socialism in one country', Stalin believed the Soviet Union should focus on building communism in Soviet-controlled countries rather than encouraging a more difficult worldwide revolution.

The New Economic Policy of 1921 allowed private individuals to own their own enterprises. This meant peasants could operate freely, keeping and trading their own produce. This encouraged an independent economy.

### ECONOMY

He wished to rapidly industrialise the economy and brought all agriculture under government control. Peasants were forced to live on group farms and there was seizure of grain hoards, land, machinery and livestock.

Lenin believed that all the oppressed people of the world had the right to self-determination, to rule themselves rather than submit to the will of the state. But he was also responsible for the Red Terror, ordering the execution of many of his opponents.

### THE PEOPLE

There were mass purges of anyone who dared to question Stalin's authority or engage in revolutionary behaviour. He believed political repression of the people was necessary to defend against the destruction of the Soviet Union.

## GULAGS

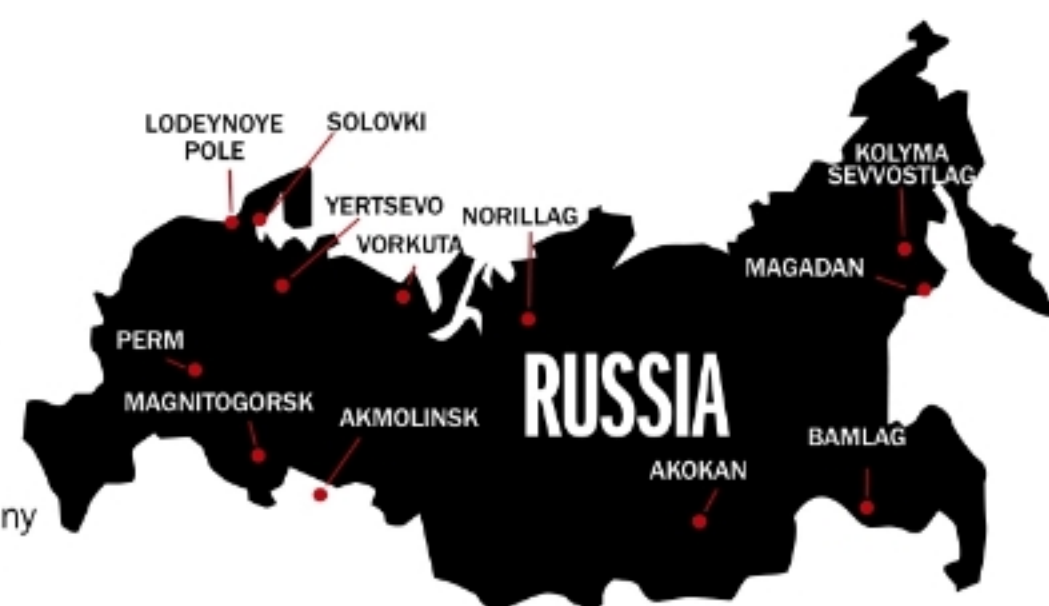
From the empty frozen plains of Siberia to the towering concrete of central cities, the brutal Gulag camps changed the face of Russia

When the term 'Gulag' was coined, it was used to refer to a government agency in charge of the forced labour camps. But to many today the word Gulag is representative of the entire Soviet system of repression, wanton arrests, tortuous interrogations, disregard for human rights and millions of needless deaths. The Gulag camps existed in a form before Stalin, though they did not bear that name. Known as 'corrective labour camps', the first was installed in 1918, but these early labour camps were very different to the ones Stalin would create. He transformed these camps, where the prisoners enjoyed relative freedom, into a widespread system of over 53 separate merciless camps and 423 labour colonies all across the Soviet Union from the 1930s to '50s. These camps would come to imprison 14 million people and claim the lives of at least 1.6 million of these unfortunates.

The vast majority of the camps were in extremely remote, inhospitable regions of northeast Siberia. One of the locations for these camps, Kolyma, struck fear into the hearts of all Gulag prisoners. With a yearlong winter, Kolyma was an unforgiving, barren place, impossible to reach overland. And the camps there, like many other Siberian camps, did not bother with fences or fortification; to seek escape across the vast freezing plains was to sentence oneself to death. The Gulag camps were not like the infamous Nazi concentration camps, which were designed to kill their prisoners, but the horrific conditions often resulted in the same outcome. The Gulags were more numerous, housed more prisoners and lasted for many more years than the brutal Nazi camps.

The prisoners, of whom a great majority had been imprisoned without trial, would face relentless years of hard labour and minimal

## RUSSIA'S ULTIMATE TYRANT: STALIN



food. The more work they completed, the larger their ration of thin, tasteless soup, but as they were supplied with primitive, broken and useless tools, achieving the high labour expectations was nearly impossible. With depleting food rations, and sometimes given only four hours' rest a day, the Gulag prisoners were worked to exhaustion and death. In the winter of 1941 alone, a quarter of the Gulags' population died of starvation.

To Stalin the Gulags were essential. His purges were so fervent that any prisoner who died in the camps could instantly be replaced and the supply of cheap labour remained uninterrupted. These prisoners played a key role in enabling Russia to win the Second World War, as they constructed essential railroads, produced ammunition and built tanks and other machines. New camps were created wherever an economic task required cheap labour, such as the Sea-Baltic Canal. The Gulag institution was finally closed in 1960, but many of the practices of these camps, such as forced labour and prisoner intimidation, continue to exist in Russian prisons to this day.



Prisoners dig for clay in the brickyard of the Solovki Island gulag





# CRIME AND PUNISHMENT

Stalin's Russia wasn't the place to be caught committing a crime

## LATE TO WORK THRICE

The punishment for repeated offences of tardiness was to be sent to the Gulag for three years. There the offenders would face up to 14 hours a day of hard physical labour.

## TELLING A JOKE ABOUT A GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL

You could face a punishment of up to 25 years in a Gulag camp for this crime. Ivan Burylov wrote the word 'Comedy' on his 'secret' ballot paper and was sentenced to eight years.

## PETTY THEFT

The sentence for stealing state property, usually food, was ten years of hard labour in a Gulag. This would often be extended without explanation and the convicts forced to live in exile once released.

## CONSPIRACY TO PREPARE UPRISING

Those accused of political crimes usually became victims of the purge and were executed. Close friends and family members would also be hunted out and disposed of.

## WORKING IN GERMANY

Many citizens of the Baltic States were forced to work in Germany during WWII. They were later arrested for this 'crime' and were sentenced to ten years of forced labour in a Gulag camp.

## PRACTISING RELIGION

In the late-1920s there was a mass purge of Christian intellectuals and closure of churches. Anyone found practising the religion was arrested, sent to Gulag camps or executed.



## THE WORST DICTATOR?

Find out the estimated number of deaths that history's worst dictators are thought to have caused



### THE COBBLER'S SON

Stalin is born as Ioseb Besarionis Dze Jugashvili. He suffers from smallpox, which permanently scars his face, and aged 12 his left arm is injured in an accident, leaving it shorter than the other.

18 December 1878



Stalin in 1894, aged 16

### LIFE IN THE PRIESTHOOD

Stalin attends Tiflis Spiritual Seminary after receiving a scholarship. During his training to join the priesthood he discovers the ideas of Marx and Engels and is inspired. He is expelled after missing his final exams.

1894-1899

### POLITICAL LIFE BEGINS

Stalin learns that Lenin has formed the Bolsheviks, a political group that follows the teachings of Marx. He signs up and proves himself a skilled and capable organiser. He is arrested and exiled to Siberia but quickly manages to escape.

1903

### A TASTE OF POWER

As the Bolsheviks seize power, Stalin rises through the ranks and is appointed the People's Commissar for Nationality Affairs. This position gives him his first taste of real power, and he uses it to burn villages and order executions.

1917

### THE STEADY RISE

Lenin appoints Stalin as General Secretary. That year Lenin suffers from a stroke and his relationship with Stalin deteriorates. He insists that Stalin be removed from his position, but Stalin's strong link of allies prevents this.

1922



## POWERFUL PROPAGANDA

Russia's 'man of steel' was a master at the art of propaganda, depicting and presenting himself as the hero of the nation

When Stalin turned 50 in December of 1929, a lavish celebration presented to the Russian people a messianic figure, the brother in arms of the adored Lenin and his humble disciple. This marked the beginning of the cult of personality surrounding Stalin that would follow him until his death and even beyond. Through the use of propaganda, Russian history was rewritten. Stalin, not Trotsky, had served as Lenin's second in command during the October Revolution and he grew not only spiritually but physically too as his modest 162-centimetre (five-foot, four-inch) frame transformed to over

183 centimetres (six feet) in the towering statues built in his image. Stalin wasn't a cruel or vicious tyrant; he was a loving and strong father figure. The phrase "Thank you, dear comrade Stalin, for a happy childhood!" appeared all over schools and nurseries, with children chanting the slogan at festivals. The title 'Father' was stolen from the priests he eliminated from his land and associated firmly with Stalin alone. And it was this 'Father Stalin' who the people adored, trusted and venerated, as the real man secretly orchestrated the deaths of millions of their families and friends.



■ The text in the poster reads "Thanks to dear Stalin for a happy childhood!" Posters such as these were created to portray Stalin as a caring, strong father figure with the Soviet population as his children. In turn, this would encourage the people's trust, respect and obedience to his regime.

## THIS MARKED THE BEGINNING OF THE CULT OF PERSONALITY THAT WOULD FOLLOW STALIN UNTIL HIS DEATH



■ The text reads "Long live the 25th anniversary of the Leninist-Stalinist Komsomol." The Komsomol was the youth division of the Communist Party, and this poster encouraged youngsters to join by displaying a powerful united force of Stalin and Lenin. Once part of the organisation, every aspect of the youth's life would be lived according to Party doctrine.



■ This poster urges people to "Work well - you will have a good wheat crop!" Posters like this were used to rouse the enthusiasm of farmers to work toward rehabilitating the country after it had been ravaged by WWII. The illustrations present an image of the ideal farm over the four seasons.

### THE DICTATOR

Lenin dies and a vicious and hurried struggle for power ensues between the leading government figures. Stalin manages to eject his rivals, such as Trotsky, from the Soviet Union, placing himself at the top of the pyramid.  
1924-1927

### FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Stalin begins the first of his 'five-year plans', with seizure of farms and factories. The result is mass famine, claiming the lives of millions. Export levels are maintained, however, with food shipped out as people starve.  
1928-1933

### THE RED TERROR

Stalin begins a campaign of political repression known as the Great Purge. 20 million Russians are sent to Gulag camps and as many as a third of the Communist Party's members are executed on suspicion of disloyalty.  
1934-1940



### WAR LEADER

After Adolf Hitler breaks the non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union, Stalin's Red Army joins forces with the Allies in WWII. Victory eventually comes to the Soviet Union, but at the cost of millions of lives.  
1941-1945

### DEATH OF A DICTATOR

Stalin suffers from a stroke and isn't found for several hours; his guards fear disturbing him. He remains bedridden for several days before dying on 5 March 1953; rumours that he was poisoned persist through the media.  
5 March 1953



## WORLD WAR II

In the carnage of WWII, Stalin aligned his country with the 'decadent' West to defeat Hitler's Nazis

By the late-1930s Stalin had found himself with very few international friends due to his extreme policies. After his attempts to sign an anti-German military alliance with Britain and France failed he was forced to ally with the last country he'd ever imagine – Nazi Germany. The Soviet Union entered into a non-aggression

pact on 23 August 1939. This was exactly what Hitler needed to eliminate his fear of a war on two fronts and eight days later Germany invaded Poland and the world was catapulted into war.

Although it was obvious to Stalin that the pact

was only there to delay an inevitable conflict between the two powers, when Hitler invaded the Soviet Union in 1941, the Soviet leader was in shock. He had ignored the warnings of Churchill, shot German deserters who had warned him of the coming attack and even supplied Germany with supplies right up until that day. Stalin retreated to his dacha for three days, ignoring telephone calls and refusing to see anyone. He was facing the brutal reality of his own actions – a weakened military of which his own purge had eliminated 40,000 men with a host of key,

talented advisors. But when he emerged it was as exactly the leader Russia needed. In the face of war, only the 'man of steel' possessed the strength required to unite his people.

Unite them he did. As Hitler's army drove its way into the Soviet Union, Stalin's forces fought to push them back over four long and bloody years. Offensives such as the Battle of Stalingrad and the Battle of Kursk tested the Soviet leader's resolve as his cities ran red with the blood of millions of soldiers and civilians. The hard-fought victory finally came, but Stalin's gaze was now focused on achieving Soviet dominance over Eastern and Central Europe, and soon a very different, colder war would begin.

**STALIN ORDERED A SCIENTIST TO CREATE A HUMAN-APE HYBRID. WHEN HE FAILED HE WAS ARRESTED AND EXILED**

The non-aggression pact was named the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, after the Soviet and Nazi ministers of the same names



## EXPERT OPINION

What kind of military leader was Russia's ultimate tyrant?

**GEOFFREY ROBERTS**

Professor Geoffrey Roberts is Head of the School of History at UCC. His books include Stalin's Wars: From World War To Cold War, 1939-1953 and Stalin's General: The Life Of

Georgy Zhukov, which was the winner of the Society for Military History Distinguished Book Award for Biography.

**HOW INVOLVED A WAR LEADER WAS STALIN?**

Stalin was involved in every aspect of the Soviet war effort – military, political, economic and diplomatic. He worked 16 hours a day and signed thousands of decrees and orders. Everyone who had dealings with him during the war was amazed by his knowledge of the technical details of the modern war machine. As Supreme Commander he was centrally involved in devising military strategy and directing large-scale operations. He was the indispensable figure of the Soviet high command.

**WAS STALIN A TACTICALLY ASTUTE LEADER?**

Politically and diplomatically Stalin was highly astute. That is apparent from the close personal connections he forged with Churchill and Roosevelt during the war and the influence he exercised within the Allied grand alliance. [Regarding the military] Stalin was stronger on strategy than tactics and he made some bad mistakes during the first

few months of the war. But he learnt from his mistakes and to take more notice of professional military advice.

Stalin's finest hour was in November 1941 when he decided to stay in Moscow when the Germans were at the gates of the Soviet capital. Stalin's presence in Moscow and some inspiring patriotic speeches he gave helped to steady Soviet nerves and defences, and bought time for the preparation of a massive counter-offensive in December 1941 that drove the Germans away from the city.

There are many great victories to choose from but the Battle of Stalingrad stands out. Summer 1942 was another moment of crisis for the Soviet Union when a German thrust south threatened the security of Soviet oil supplies. Stalingrad, which barred the way to the German advance, almost fell to them, but the Red Army staged a heroic defence and managed to hang on to a bridgehead in the city. Once again, Stalin and his generals held their nerve and carefully prepared a counter-stroke that encircled the Germans in Stalingrad and forced them to surrender. Stalingrad was a defeat from which the Germans never really recovered.

**WHAT WAS HIS GREATEST FAILURE?**

It is often said that Stalin's greatest failure was that he did not anticipate the German invasion of Russia in June 1941. I think the failure was more one of strategic imagination and preparation. Stalin and his generals underestimated the power of the German attack and overestimated the strength of Soviet defences and their capacity to

counter-attack. Stalin knew the Germans were going to attack, if not precisely when, but he was confident he and the Red Army could deal with all contingencies, including a surprise attack. In a sense he was right – the Soviet Union was able to survive the German invasion, but the cost was enormous and almost catastrophic. By the end of 1941 the Germans had reached Moscow, surrounded Leningrad and penetrated deep into the southern USSR. Perhaps the most grievous loss was Kiev, the Ukrainian capital, which fell to the Germans in September 1941. Stalin personally refused to allow the withdrawal of the Red Army from the Kiev area, resulting in several hundred thousand troops being encircled and captured by the Germans.

**DO YOU THINK THE MASSIVE CASUALTIES OF THE SOVIET ARMY AFFECTED STALIN?**

Stalin was a person of great feeling but also of very little human empathy. He could be a very emotional person, subject to violent mood swings, and often displayed great sentimentality as well as anger. He was also an ideologue and an intellectual who thought in terms of grand designs and abstractions and spent much of his life engrossed in the written word and in political contexts that were sheltered from the brutal realities of war. These latter qualities helped inoculate Stalin from the sufferings of his troops. Stalin was utopian and an idealist who believed that the ends justified the means, however brutal, and he had the emotional make-up that enabled taking and living with numerous extremely harsh decisions.

**HOW MUCH DID THE LEADERSHIP OF STALIN CONTRIBUTE TO THE ULTIMATE VICTORY?**

I have made myself unpopular with people who see only evil in Stalin by arguing that the Soviet dictator was the one essential Allied leader during the Second World War. Without his leadership the Soviet Union would in all probability have lost the war with Nazi Germany. The Soviet system that confronted Hitler's regime was Stalin's system, the system he had created in the 1920s and '30s. If Stalin hadn't performed well during the war the system would have collapsed in the face of the devastating blows it received. There was no substitute Soviet leader.

**HOW WOULD YOU SUM UP STALIN'S LEADERSHIP STYLE DURING WWII?**

Energetic, authoritative, calculating, controlled and ruthless. He made a lot of mistakes but was more right than wrong after the first few disastrous months. He was a learning war leader. In relation to his generals, he reinvented himself as a team player, as a combination of chairman and managing director. He imposed a harsh disciplinary regime on the Red Army and the whole country and had no compunction in destroying those he saw as his enemies. Stalin was a great warlord, but he was also a ruthless and brutal one. He did great harm to millions of innocent people as well as serving humanity well in defeating Hitler and the Nazis. It is that combination of good and evil that makes Stalin the most paradoxical and important dictator of the 20th century.



# STALIN'S DIPLOMACY

How the Soviet leader tried to control and manage the only men who could rival him for power



## ADOLF HITLER The Father and the Führer

As a fascist and a communist, Hitler and Stalin couldn't be further apart politically. Hitler's frequent condemnation of the Soviet Union and claims that Slavic people were inferior did little to help relations. However, it became in both of their interests to ally with each other. Of course, this façade of friendship did not last long, as Hitler invaded Soviet territory and the anticipated war broke out. The two dictators shared a certain respect for the other's power though, and Hitler is quoted as saying, "Stalin is one of the most extraordinary figures in world history. He began as a small clerk and he has never stopped being a clerk. Stalin owes nothing to rhetoric. He governs from his office, thanks to a bureaucracy that obeys his every nod and gesture."



## WINSTON CHURCHILL Putting up the Iron Curtain

The relationship between these two great leaders started off on rocky ground – Churchill's hatred of communism was well known, and Stalin was suspicious of the Western powers who he believed had abandoned his Red Army. But in order to beat the German invasion, they had to assume a united front. Churchill was satisfied that his charm and personality had won the dictator over, but Stalin had secretly installed a network of spies in London and could plan his own perfect 'performance' when dealing with the British leader. Although photos and film footage show the two men seemingly free of past misgivings, in reality Stalin would always be the one nut Churchill was unable to crack.



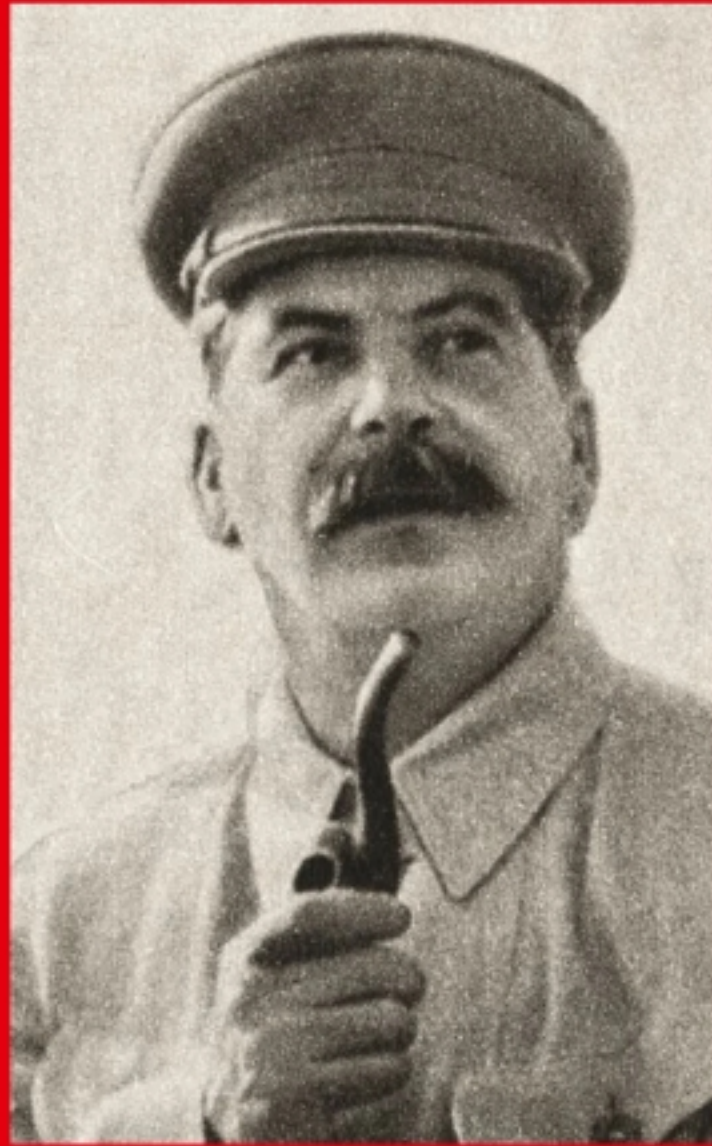
## FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT Looking after Uncle Joe

Roosevelt possessed a close relationship with Churchill and this was something he believed could be extended to Stalin, despite warnings from Churchill not to trust the Soviet leader. Roosevelt repeatedly sided with Stalin in order to encourage this relationship, which he believed would prevent Soviet expansion after the war. Instead of standing up to Stalin, something his advisors pushed for, Roosevelt gave him whatever he wanted and referred to him affectionately as 'Uncle Joe.' This naivety was pounced on and exploited by the Soviet dictator, and the results in the coming years proved Roosevelt's approach to be disastrous to the Soviet-American partnership he desired.

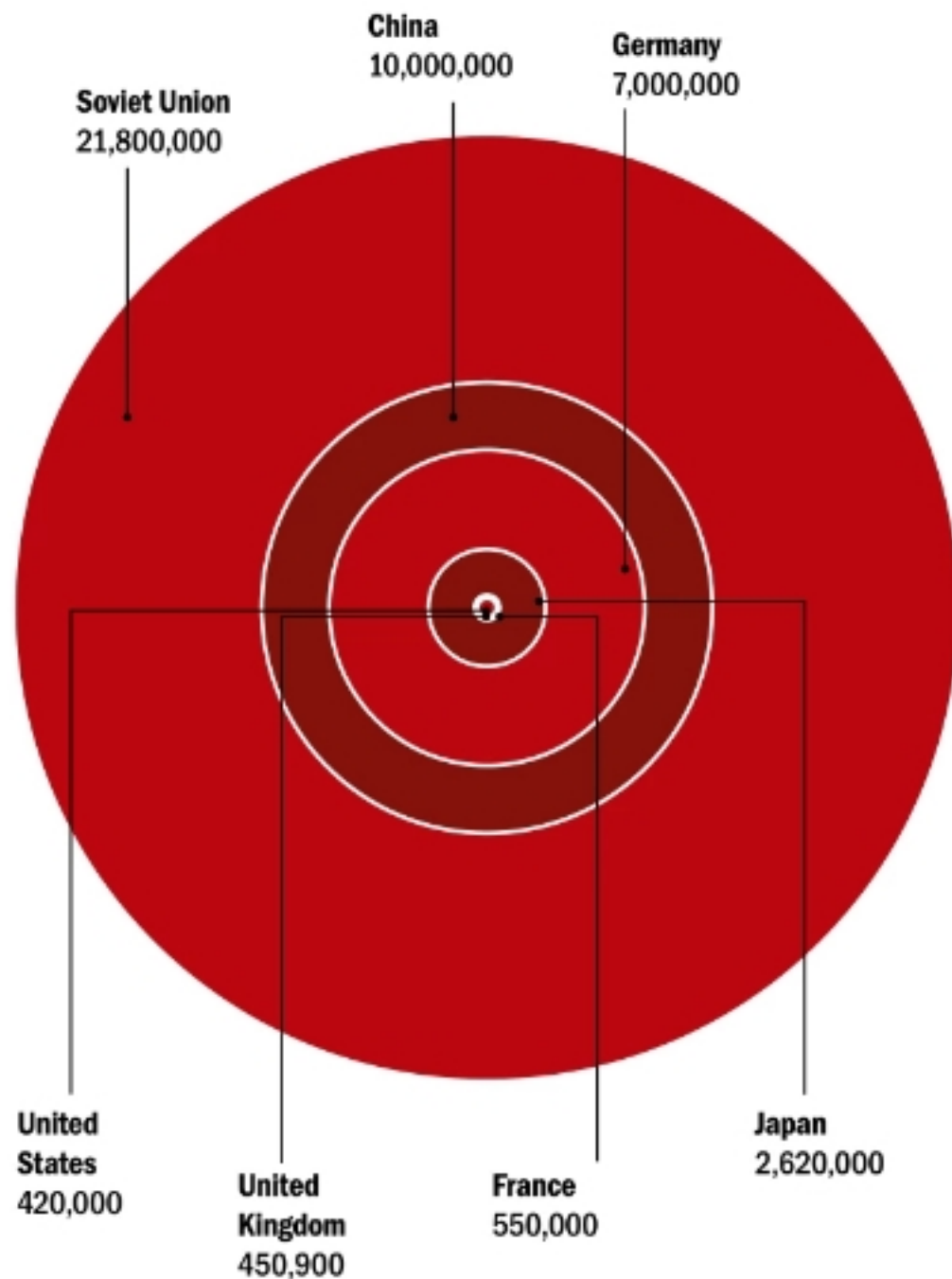


## BENITO MUSSOLINI The two tyrants

Despite believing in very different political systems and ideologies, communism and fascism, Stalin and Mussolini had a lot in common. They both tried to establish governments with complete control over their citizens, they used propaganda to do so and they radically transformed their countries. Mussolini had some admiration toward Stalin, mainly due to his respect for Lenin, but when he allied with Hitler he eliminated any chance of the two men forming a friendship or allegiance. The Russian dictator considered his Italian counterpart to be weak, viewing him as little more than a puppet for Hitler to use as he saw fit. Overall Stalin generally dismissed Mussolini, paying him and his actions very little attention.



## A HEAVY PRICE: WWII'S DEATH TOLL



## 5 FACTS ABOUT STALINGRAD

- 1** 110,000 German soldiers were taken prisoner at Stalingrad; only 5,000 of them would ultimately return to Germany.
- 2** When ordered by Hitler to fight to the last bullet, Paulus said, "I've no intention of shooting myself for this Bohemian corporal."
- 3** One of the deliveries dropped to the German soldiers amid the Russian winter was 20 tons of vodka and summer uniforms.
- 4** The living conditions of the soldiers were so terrible that a Red Army conscript in Stalingrad had a life expectancy of 24 hours.
- 5** A national day of mourning was ordered by Hitler, not for the loss of men but for the shame the surrender brought to Germany.



# SEEDS OF THE COLD WAR

DESPITE THEIR WORLD WAR II VICTORY OVER A COMMON ENEMY, LINGERING IDEOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES AND THE SOVIET UNION SPAWNED A FROSTY STAND-OFF

**A**n ancient proverb pragmatically states: 'The enemy of my enemy is my friend.' So it was during World War II as the United States, United Kingdom and the Soviet Union set aside their differing political and ideological perspectives to defeat the common peril of Nazi Germany.

From the beginning, however, the bonds that brought unlikely allies together to win the war were strained. It was a marriage of convenience punctuated by several salient facts. The Soviet Union had signed a non-aggression pact with the Nazis in 1939 and actively participated in the invasion and partition of Poland while outright annexing the Baltic States of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia. The Soviets had also fought a bitter war of northern expansion against Finland in 1939-40, prompting the UK to consider intervention on the side of the Finns. Furthermore, Western observers remained keenly aware of the stated Soviet goal to export communist ideology across the globe.

For their part, the Soviets were always wary. They remembered Western support and even armed intervention against their regime during the Russian Civil War that followed the Bolshevik Revolution. The United States had also withheld acknowledgment of the Soviet Union as a player on the world stage, waiting until 1933 to grant full diplomatic recognition. The Poles had invaded Russian-held Ukraine in 1919; therefore, from the USSR's perspective, the 1939 invasion of Poland was just retribution and part of a larger effort to establish a buffer against future incursions from the West.

The Germans had ravaged Russia from that direction in 1914, only one example of numerous aggressor armies that utilised the

western approaches to the Russian frontier as a highway for invasion. The United States and United Kingdom, the Soviets believed, would never understand their lingering insecurity and the need to maintain a sphere of influence on their borders.

## WARTIME WRANGLING

Operation Barbarossa, the Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union on 22 June 1941, shifted the paradigm precipitously. With Lend-Lease aid from the United States, the Red Army eventually rallied and rolled toward the Nazi capital of Berlin from the east in 1944 and 1945; however, Soviet casualties were staggering. While the United States and United Kingdom considered offensive options against Germany, the Soviets shouldered the brunt of the Allied effort against the Nazis. When the war was finally over, 20 million Soviet military personnel and civilians had perished.

Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin perpetually feared that the US and UK would negotiate a separate peace with the Germans. He clamoured for a second front in Western Europe to ease the pressure on the Red Army. The Americans and British opted for landings in North Africa in the autumn of 1942, then Sicily and Italy the following year. Finally, in 1944, British and American forces crossed the English Channel, landing in Normandy to undertake a concerted offensive towards Germany itself. Stalin's suspicions were only confirmed – that his 'allies' had intentionally delayed the cross-Channel assault so that the death struggle between the Nazis and the Red Army would bleed the Soviet Union white.

As American and Soviet soldiers shook hands at the village of Torgau on the Elbe River

★  
**JOSEPH STALIN PERPETUALLY FEARED THAT THE US AND UK WOULD NEGOTIATE A SEPARATE PEACE WITH GERMANY**  
★



■ From left, The Big Three, Churchill, Roosevelt and Stalin, pose during their historic meeting at Yalta in 1945







in April 1945, splitting the Third Reich in two, the rift between the strategic partners grew even wider. Western leaders were worried that the Soviets had gobbled up huge swaths of Eastern Europe. Would they simply withdraw when the war was over? When the Germans formally surrendered to the British and Americans in a schoolhouse in Reims, France, on 7 May 1945, a Soviet representative was present and signed the surrender document. For Stalin, however, it was not good enough. The Soviets demanded a second surrender in Berlin hours later.

### WINNING THE PEACE

With eyes firmly fixed on the balance of power, the map of post-war Europe, and the extension of influence into the emerging Third World, the Big Three – President Franklin D Roosevelt, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill and Soviet Premier Stalin – met at the Black Sea resort of Yalta in the Crimea on 4-11 February 1945. A previously agreed upon protocol for zones of occupation in Germany and Austria was ratified, and the cities of Berlin and Vienna were also to be divided into such zones.

Although Roosevelt and Churchill secured a timetable for Soviet entry into the war in the Pacific against Japan and established some ground rules for the formation of the United Nations, the status of Poland became one of the first tangible bones of contention as the alliance, nearing victory, began to crumble.

Stalin stated, "Russia has sinned against Poland in the past... the Soviet government wishes to atone for those sins... Poland must be strong... and the Soviet Union is interested in the creation of a mighty, free and independent Poland." Ever suspicious of Stalin, Churchill believed that the Soviet leader was nothing more than a wolf in sheep's clothing.

Regardless of Stalin's promising declarations, Red Army troops already occupied Poland, and the communists were undoubtedly determined to preserve the country's interim pro-Soviet government. Conversely, the US and UK contended that the Polish government-in-exile more accurately represented the true will of the people. Roosevelt conceded to ambiguous language that a more broadly based government would be enabled in Poland through free elections at some future date. Although some historians believe that Roosevelt sold out to Stalin on the Polish question, he had been forced to acknowledge that Russian troops were already in control there.

Naively or not, the president also believed the most opportune time for the resolution of emerging post-war issues was after the end of the fighting. However, Roosevelt did not live to see it. He died two months after Yalta and only weeks prior to the pivotal Potsdam Conference, held in a suburb of Berlin from 17 July through 2 August 1945.



■ During the fall of Berlin, Soviet soldiers display their red flag emblazoned with the hammer and sickle over the ruined streets

When the victors of World War II convened once again, two of the leaders were newcomers. President Harry S Truman represented the United States, and the British electorate turned Churchill out of office in the midst of the conference in favour of a new prime minister, Clement Attlee. At Potsdam, the Big Three agreed on several aspects of the administration of occupied Germany, including an initiative to prosecute Nazi war criminals, the issuing of joint statements on denazification and other topics, and the implementation of a process providing for war reparations to the Soviet Union derived from its occupation zone in Germany.

President Truman, only recently made aware of the existence of the atomic bomb, had actually delayed the start of the Potsdam Conference to receive word that the wonder weapon was fully functional. During one of the sessions, Truman leaned close to Stalin and commented that the United States was in possession of a "new weapon of unusual destructive force."

Stalin replied dryly that he hoped the United States would "make good use of this new addition to the Allied arsenal."

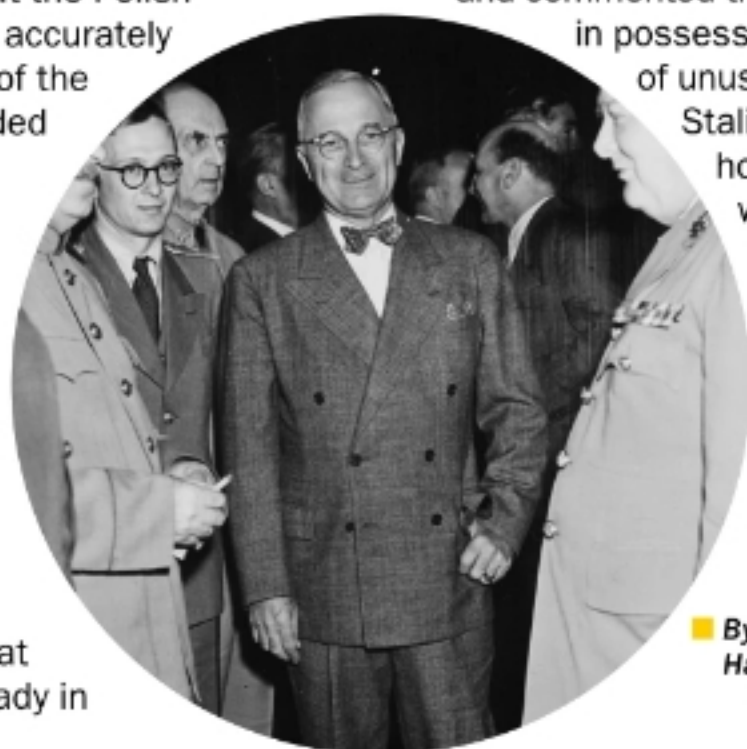
Although Truman did not specifically mention a nuclear weapon, Stalin had been informed of the progress of the

Manhattan Project through his extensive espionage network in the United States. A week after the leaders departed Potsdam, the US dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, ending World War II in the Pacific. After the Americans had demonstrated the destructive power of their new weapon, they offered the Soviets virtually no role in the post-war occupation and rehabilitation of Japan. Forced to contend with the US nuclear monopoly, Stalin became even more contentious as time passed.

### BUILDING THE EASTERN BLOC

Soon after the war in Europe ended, refugees began to flee westward from the great nations where the Soviet military was ensconced. Even before the end of the war, the Soviets had orchestrated the establishment of the Communist government in Albania. As early as 1944, Churchill recognised the shape of things to come in Eastern Europe. "Make no mistake, all of the Balkans apart from Greece are going to be Bolshevised, and there is nothing I can do to prevent it. There is nothing I can do for Poland either," he lamented. Soon enough, the Greek government would actually be fighting for its life against a communist insurgency.

By 1946, communist rule had been consolidated in Bulgaria and Romania. The following year, Hungary followed suit as the



■ By his own admission, US president Harry S Truman underestimated his Soviet counterpart, Joseph Stalin

★  
**THE SOVIET DICTATOR BELIEVED THAT HIS FORMER ALLIES WOULD BEGIN TO BICKER AND SQUABBLE AMONG THEMSELVES**  
★



■ American soldiers waded toward shore during the 1944 invasion of Normandy. Stalin believed the Western Allies deliberately delayed the cross-Channel attack to weaken the USSR



already dominant communists unmasked their control of Poland. In 1948, Soviet-backed communists had seized power in Czechoslovakia via a coup d'état. In that same year amid rising tensions, the Soviets began to ease German communist leaders into power in their occupation zone. In 1949, the German Democratic Republic, popularly known as East Germany, was declared.

Early in the post-war period, Stalin and his advisors had counted on an economic downturn in the West. Top-ranking Soviet economists predicted that the US government would substantially reduce defence spending and that pent-up consumer demand would be unleashed on a vulnerable economy then transitioning from wartime to peacetime production, touching off rampant inflation in the United States and precipitating a severe recession. The Soviet dictator also believed that his former allies would begin to bicker and squabble among themselves, each vying for economic supremacy as the decadent democracies regressed into pre-war policies of colonialism and exploitation of underdeveloped countries.

As neither of these scenarios materialised, The Soviets became more determined than ever to protect their own interests, exporting their ideology across Europe and elsewhere in the hope of creating a communist continent that the Soviet Union would utterly dominate.

American possession of the atomic bomb compounded Stalin's concerns for Soviet security. Four long years elapsed from Hiroshima and Nagasaki to the first successful detonation of a Soviet nuclear device on 29 August 1949. Meanwhile, the Soviets were obliged to consider to possibility of a nuclear strike in the event of an outbreak of war with

## THE IRON CURTAIN SPEECH

On 5 March 1946, at Westminster College in Fulton, Missouri, former British Prime Minister Winston Churchill delivered one of the earliest acknowledgments of the Cold War

■ Former Prime Minister Winston Churchill coined the term 'Iron Curtain' to describe the division of Europe

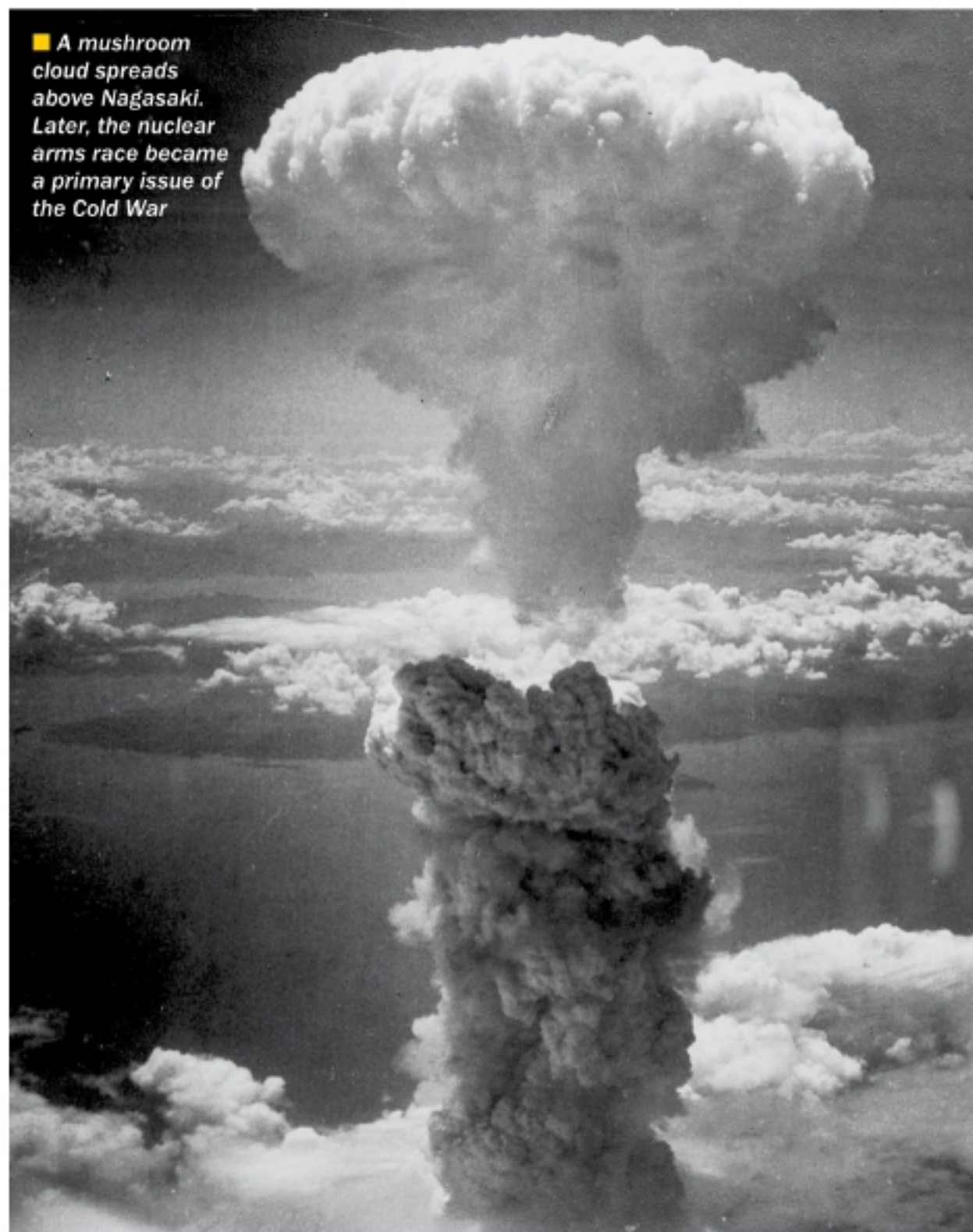
While President Harry Truman listened intently, Churchill, who had lost a bid for re-election the previous year, eloquently addressed his audience on the need for a closer relationship between the United Kingdom and the United States.

Declaring that there was "nothing which they admire so much as strength, and there is nothing for which they have less respect than for military weakness," Churchill lashed the Soviet Union for its policies in Eastern Europe, warning of continuing efforts to spread communism.

In measured tone, he noted, "From Stettin in the Baltic to Trieste in the Adriatic, an iron curtain has descended across the continent." Immediately, the phrase 'Iron Curtain' came into widespread use, identifying the Eastern European sphere under the control of the Cold War adversary.







■ A mushroom cloud spreads above Nagasaki. Later, the nuclear arms race became a primary issue of the Cold War



■ Allied troops march through the streets of Vladivostok in 1918 during the intervention in the Russian Civil War

the West, even though the Red Army greatly outnumbered American and British conventional forces stationed on the continent.

## CONTAINMENT AND ECONOMICS

By the end of World War II, the prevailing American anti-communist strategy was embodied in a policy called 'Containment'. In 1946, George Kennan, an American diplomat, became the foremost advocate of Containment. Kennan wrote that the Soviet Union was actually a "political force committed fanatically to the belief that with the US there can be no permanent *modus vivendi*." Further, he reasoned that the West was compelled to pursue "long-term, patient but firm and vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies."

In the wake of the global war, along with the countless lives that had been lost, the economies of the nations of Europe were devastated. Amid the growing threat of the westward expansion of communism, the United States reconsidered a previously held position

on the status of post-war Germany within the family of nations.

During the Second Quebec Conference of September 1944, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill had agreed to adopt the Morgenthau Plan, a proposal offered by US Secretary of the Treasury Henry Morgenthau Jr. The Morgenthau Plan essentially advocated the eradication of Germany's ability to wage war in the future. The armament industry was to be eliminated, and any associated enterprises would follow suit or be drastically curtailed. Germany would be pacified as a non-threatening pastoral country.

Within two years, the situation had changed. The most promising bulwark against Soviet expansion was the restoration of economic prosperity in Europe. Displaced people who returned to

homes that had been destroyed, without jobs, without futures, and without hope, were ripe for the absorption of communist philosophy. On 6 September 1946, Secretary of State James F Byrnes travelled to Germany and delivered a groundbreaking speech that shredded the Morgenthau Plan and warned the Soviets that the United States would maintain a military presence in Western Europe indefinitely.

Byrnes later explained, "The nub of our programme was to win the German people... It was a battle between us and Russia over minds."

The Joint Chiefs of Staff Directive 1779 soon followed. This policy document related directly to the revised slate of goals that the 'Free World' sought to achieve in post-war Germany. It stated plainly, "An orderly,

prosperous Europe requires the economic contributions of a

stable and productive Germany."

On 12 March 1947, President Truman delivered a landmark speech to a joint session of Congress, declaring that the United States would provide assistance to any democratic nation threatened with overthrow by internal or external "authoritarian" influences. Hand in



■ Shortages of food and coal prompted these German citizens to protest in 1947, prior to the implementation of the Marshall Plan

★  
**THE PRESIDENT WAS CLEAR THAT SUCH AID MIGHT TAKE THE FORM OF ECONOMIC, HUMANITARIAN OR MILITARY SUPPORT**  
★





■ Secretary of State George C Marshall, shown in Army uniform, was the architect of the European relief plan that bore his name

hand with the Containment policy, the president was clear that such aid might take the form of economic, humanitarian or military support. In the same speech, he requested that Congress authorise \$400 million in aid to Greece and Turkey, where the Soviets appeared to be fomenting continued political unrest.

The president's stance came to be known as the Truman Doctrine, and to further implement the policy a massive foreign aid initiative in Europe had to be developed. General George C Marshall, Army Chief of Staff and a close advisor to President Roosevelt during the war years, was appointed Secretary of State in early 1947, and at mid-year he outlined a sweeping aid programme intended to revitalise the European economy. The Soviets declined to participate in the programme, which has become known to history as the Marshall Plan, and forbade their Eastern European vassals from doing so as well.

The Marshall Plan became operational on 8 April 1948, and during the next four years provided \$13 billion in American aid to 16 nations to energise the strapped European economy, rebuilding infrastructure, modernising industry and feeding the hungry. While accomplishing tremendous humanitarian relief, the Marshall Plan contributed mightily to the containment of communism.

## BULLYING, BLOCKADE AND THE CURTAIN FALLS

The Soviet response to the Marshall Plan was dramatic. The communists developed

## THE HOUSE UN-AMERICAN ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

For the US public, fear of communism was nothing new as the Cold War dawned

The House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) had been formed in 1938, its mission to investigate elements within society that were potentially traitorous or disloyal to the government.

Investigations during the Roosevelt administration were generally rebuffed. However, the advent of the Cold War gave HUAC new life, wielding Congressional power to subpoena witnesses and to hold individuals in contempt. HUAC began a series of hearings in 1947 that implicated hundreds of people, labelling many

witnesses as 'Red' when they were defensive or non-compliant during testimony. The film industry was hit hard. More than 500 individuals were blacklisted, impeded from pursuing their livelihoods because of perceived left-wing sympathies.

Riding the crest of the anti-communist wave in the 1950s, Senator Joseph McCarthy notoriously broadened the HUAC model to include government employees. The US Senate eventually censured McCarthy.



■ Actor Gary Cooper, a motion picture star, testifies before the House Un-American Activities Committee in the autumn of 1947

## ★ WHILE ACCOMPLISHING TREMENDOUS HUMANITARIAN RELIEF, THE MARSHALL PLAN CONTRIBUTED MIGHTILY TO THE CONTAINMENT OF COMMUNISM ★

their own economic aid package, referred to as the Molotov Plan in reference to Soviet Foreign Minister Vyacheslav Molotov. The regime change in Czechoslovakia was a direct intervention to prevent that nation from accepting Marshall Plan assistance. In June 1948, the Soviets closed the roads leading to West Berlin and shut off electrical power and water, in an attempt to force the US, UK and France to abandon it.

The Berlin Blockade resulted in the Berlin Airlift to maintain essential supplies to the population of West Berlin. Since the military presence of the Western powers in Europe was dwarfed by the sheer number of Red Army tanks and troops present, the US and United Kingdom undertook the massive air relief effort that proved highly successful. In May 1949, the Soviets admitted defeat and lifted the blockade. The Berlin Airlift resulted in two unintended consequences. It strengthened the ties of friendship between the US and UK and the people of West Germany, while the embarrassed Soviets hardened further diplomatically.

From a pragmatic point of view, the West could do little as the Soviets tightened their grip on Eastern Europe. By the time President Dwight D Eisenhower was elected in 1952, the phrase 'Iron Curtain' (coined by Churchill) was in vogue, describing the closed nature of the communist states. Still, the Cold War heated up steadily during the coming years as the superpowers vied for pre-eminence in the Third World through direct economic aid, proxy wars, espionage and diplomatic bombast, while the threat of nuclear war and an uncontrolled arms race gave rise to the theory of Mutually Assured Destruction (MAD). Hotspots on the Korean Peninsula and in Vietnam and Cuba emerged, while the Middle East and the continent of Africa were drawn into the volatile mix.

Although the cataclysm of World War II hastened the coming of the Cold War, ideological and economic differences had already sown the seeds of the conflict. The real tragedy of the half century of contention lies at least in part with those whose inability to reason together resulted in years of strife.



# THE IRON CURTAIN FALLS

The Soviet Union suffered tremendous casualties during World War II, and with such a hard-won victory the communist regime of Premier Joseph Stalin was determined to maintain the security of the nation against future invasion from the West. To that end, the Soviets extended influence into areas occupied by the Red Army at the conclusion of the war. The Soviets sought to solidify their wartime gains through the installation of communist puppet governments in Eastern Europe, the maintenance of overwhelming superiority in armed forces on the continent, and the extension of communist influence into other areas through overt and covert means.

## THE GDR IS BORN

Following the inception of the massive US-sponsored Marshall Plan to revive the European economy, the Soviet Union announced the formation of the German Democratic Republic in 1949, comprising the territory of the post-World War II Soviet occupation zone. German communists were installed in government positions, and East Germany assumed a frontline position in the Soviet Bloc.



## COMMUNIST COUP IN CZECHOSLOVAKIA

With complete Soviet support, the communist party of Czechoslovakia seized power in that country with a coup d'état in February 1948. The event triggered a quickened Western European pace to establish the nation of West Germany, curb communist influence in France and Italy, and hasten acceptance of the economic aid offered through the Marshall Plan.



WEST  
GERMANY

EAST  
GERMANY

POLAND

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

HUNGARY



## USSR

### POLISH PERSPECTIVE

The Soviet Red Army occupied Poland during its westward march across Europe, eliminating organised opposition to a pro-communist government in the process. The future of Poland was a primary issue during the Yalta Conference in early 1945. Although Premier Joseph Stalin offered assurances of free elections in a reasonable period of time, his promises were never fulfilled.



### FORCE OF ARMS IN HUNGARY

Pro-Soviet political manoeuvring resulted in the installation of a communist regime in Hungary during the late 1940s. Although the nation was within the Soviet sphere of influence, dissatisfaction among the people resulted in open rebellion in 1956. With the introduction of Red Army troops and tanks, however, the uprising was crushed.



### GROWING UNREST IN GREECE

During the late 1940s, communist paramilitary forces that had previously battled the Nazis during World War II mounted an insurgency against the elected government of Greece. The Soviets supported the insurgency despite quiet guarantees of non-interference. Initially British and then American aid enabled the pro-democracy government forces to eventually quell the uprising.



## GREECE



# KEY PLAYER: HARRY S TRUMAN

THE ONLY PRESIDENT TO HAVE USED ATOMIC WEAPONS IN WAR, TRUMAN OVERSAW RADICAL CHANGES IN THE POST-WAR US AND FACED DOWN THE SOVIET UNION

**P**resident Franklin D Roosevelt was always going to be a tough act to follow. Harry Truman was at house speaker Sam Rayburn's office when came the phone call instructing him to "come quickly and quietly" at just after 5pm Eastern War Time on 12 April 1945.

Upon being told of the president's death by his wife Eleanor, Truman asked her if there was anything he could do for her.

"Is there anything we can do for you?" replied the first lady incredulously. "You are the one who is in trouble now."

At 7pm a group gathered in the cabinet room at the White House for the swearing in of Truman that included his wife Bess and daughter Margaret. Three hours and 14 minutes after the death of FDR, the former vice president placed his hand on the Bible and recited the oath of office.

"The whole weight of the Moon and stars fell on me," he later told the press.

He had come a long way from his birthplace of Lamar, Missouri, a bookish boy whose father had gone broke trading in wheat futures in 1901 and later moved the family to Independence to further his son's education.

'Mama' Martha Ellen Truman had used the family Bible to teach young Harry to read. By the time he was twelve, he had read the entire Bible and all of Mark Twain twice. He also showed promise as a player of classical piano.

At 16 Harry was living with railroad labour gangs and two years later he was working as a Kansas City bank clerk. He returned home to run the family farm in 1906, taking over full-time in 1917.

That same year he embarked for the war in Europe with General John J Pershing's expeditionary force. Elected a first lieutenant in the National Guard, he transformed the ill-disciplined Battery D 129th Field Artillery, 60th Brigade, 35th Infantry Division into one of the most effective units in the army. Lieutenant Truman's men knocked out a German battery during the Muese-Argonne offensive of 1918.

Truman had also saved a son of one of the Pendergast brothers from an Army court martial. Tom and Mike Pendergast controlled Kansas and much of Missouri's Democrat

machine. Following an unsuccessful stint as a haberdasher, their influence secured Truman the chance to run for a court judgeship. By the time he became Senator from Missouri, however, Truman faced sneers that he was the 'Senator from Pendergast.'

Truman made his name investigating wartime production, exposing waste and the production of faulty steel. By 1944, he was embroiled in the factional rivalry of the Democratic national convention's vice presidential nomination. For the liberal-left, the obvious choice was the vice president Henry Wallace. Others backed either the war mobilisation director James F Byrnes or Supreme Court Justice William O Douglas, both of whom FDR had endorsed. The president himself eventually came to favour Truman, however, after being warned by his advisors that the latter would alienate organised labour and African Americans.

Truman demurred at first. On 19 July he was called to a meeting of party bosses where he overheard FDR's voice from the telephone saying: "Well you tell the senator that if he wants to break up the Democratic Party in the middle of a war that's his responsibility."

Truman would serve only 82 days as vice president. The two men were never close.

Initially, Truman was overshadowed by Roosevelt, lacking the charisma and public speaking skills of his predecessor. However, the American public considered him straight-talking, feisty and honest, characteristics that played to his advantage during the 1948 Presidential election.

Truman oversaw the conversion of the American economy from wartime production to one that emphasised consumerism. He protected the New Deal with a rise in the minimum wage in 1949 and an expansion of social security. He did not roll back many of FDR's wartime interventions in the economy, which had included state monopolies, wage and price controls.

However, the immediate post-war economy was hobbled by high inflation and the shortage of many consumer goods such as cars, housing, refrigerators, sugar and meat. This was also an era of massive industrial unrest: a record 4.6 million workers, one in ten of the labour force, went on strike in 1946.



■ In January 1949, Truman's inauguration was the first in American history to be nationally televised

## LIFE IN THE TIME OF HARRY S TRUMAN

### CIVIL RIGHTS

Despite Truman's background, he realised that his predecessor had dragged his feet on civil rights. He appointed a civil rights commission and later legislation provoked a revolt at the 1948 Democratic national convention as 'Dixiecrats' rallied around the governor of South Carolina J Strom Thurmond, a noted conservative and critic of Truman.

### LIVING STANDARDS

The Truman years were characterised by unprecedented affluence: the national output of 1946 would double within a decade. By 1951 a typical American family ate two and half tons of food: the American child in 1950 was two and a half inches taller than his predecessor in 1900.

### HOLLYWOOD AND HUAC

When the House of Un-American Activities went on the warpath in October 1947, determined to stamp out supposed communist subversion in Hollywood, they could rely on the help of reactionary studio bosses such as Jack Warner, Louis B Mayer and Walt Disney to name names.

### WORKERS AND BOSSES

Industrial conflict, dormant in the war years, now reignited. A steel strike in January 1946 brought 800,000 workers out and was followed by a coal strike in April and a rail strike in May. Coupled with inflation, strikes contributed to the Democratic mauling in the 1946 midterm elections.

### EX-SOLDIERS

Hundreds of thousands of servicemen returned home to start families: the post-war 'baby boom' would have profound economic and sociological consequences in the coming decades. Truman also wanted to follow up FDR's New Deal with a package of employment, health, education and insurance reforms called the 'Fair Deal' in the face of fierce Republican opposition.



During the Truman presidency, the military was desegregated and a federal report on civil rights was commissioned. His administration was harried by the Republicans, especially after they captured Congress in the 1946 mid-term elections. The Democratic Party was also challenged by more factionalism, at least during Truman's first term.

The former FDR vice president, later secretary of commerce, Henry Wallace, launched the left-wing Progressive Party in December 1947. Truman also faced a 'Dixiecrat' revolt in the south over his attempts to extend civil rights.

Hostility to communism was rife within the political culture of the late 1940s: the 1946 mid-term election brought such young Red-baiting firebrands as Joseph McCarthy (Wisconsin) and Richard Nixon (California) to public attention.

Rooting out the supposed web of covert spies and saboteurs in the pay of Moscow even reached as far as Hollywood (life and times) where the future president, Ronald Reagan, as president of the Screen Actors' Guild, was an enthusiastic scourge of big screen leftism.

## CLEANSING AMERICAN ENTERTAINMENT OF ALLEGED COMMUNIST INFLUENCE WAS OFTEN A PARANOID BUSINESS

Cleansing American entertainment of alleged communist influence was often a vindictive and paranoid business: many Americans 'blacklisted' by the House of Un-American Activities (HUAC) often had their careers ruined over little more than innuendo and their association with others. Truman and his secretary of state Dean Acheson were likewise accused by conservative Republicans like Nixon of being 'soft' on communism, to the detriment of their political reputations.

To the anger of many conservatives, Acheson had said he stood by Alger Hiss, a State Department official, after his 1950 perjury conviction. Hiss had been named by the senior Time magazine editor Whittaker Chambers as a Soviet spy when the latter testified before HUAC in August 1948.

But the fear of espionage was not a baseless one during the Truman era. Newly installed as president, Truman had taken Stalin aside at Potsdam on 24 July 1945 and whispered that the United States was preparing a new secret weapon against the Japanese. But Stalin already knew about the atom bomb, thanks to the British spies Klaus Fuchs and Donald McClean. The 1951 trial and subsequent execution of Julius and Ethel Rosenberg for passing atomic secrets to the Soviets outraged many liberals. But declassified Soviet cables decades later revealed Julius to have been a Soviet courier.

Truman's foreign policy, however, was defined by its opposition to Soviet communism. He had taken power only a few weeks before the suicide of Adolf Hitler. By the end of his administration, the United Nations, led by American forces, was locked into a stalemated war against communist forces on the remote Korean peninsula.

During Truman's first term the Allies accepted the unconditional surrender of the Axis powers and the United Nations Charter was signed. In 1947 he introduced the Truman Doctrine in order to provide aid to Greece and Turkey, seeking to prevent the two nations from becoming Soviet supplicants.

That same year, Truman instituted the Marshall Plan (see timeline) to rescue Europe's war-wrecked economies. By 1948, he had recognised the State of Israel and that June he initiated an airlift of food and supplies to



■ Truman with Churchill and Stalin at Potsdam



### BORN IN MISSOURI

Harry is born in Lamar, Missouri, though the Truman family later moves to Independence when he is six. He meets his future wife Bess Wallace at the First Presbyterian Sunday School there.  
**8 May 1884**

### BECOMES A PRESIDING JUDGE

Truman is sworn in and serves two four-year terms in Jackson County Court. He becomes the senator from Missouri in 1934, beating his Republican rival Roscoe C Patterson by more than 262,000 votes.  
**January 1927**

### ANNOUNCES VE DAY

Germany surrenders to the Allied forces on 7 May 1945. Truman announces the surrender to the American public by radio one day later, a little under a month after FDR's death made him 33rd president.  
**8 May 1945**

### TRUMAN MEETS STALIN

Truman and Stalin meet for the first time at Potsdam and Truman judges Stalin as "honest but smart as hell." Years later he would admit he had been an "innocent idealist" in the company of Stalin who privately mocked him.  
**17 July 1945**

### BOMBING OF HIROSHIMA

Truman announces the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima by the US Air Force B-29 bomber Enola Gay. Nagasaki is bombed three days later, with the two bombings killing at least 130,000 Japanese civilians.  
**6 August 1945**

### TRUMAN DOCTRINE ANNOUNCED

Truman requests an appropriation of \$400 million before a joint session of Congress in order to defeat communism in Greece and Turkey. The Truman Doctrine was passed and received the support of most Republicans.  
**12 March 1947**



Western-held areas of Berlin after Soviet forces blocked access. In 1949 Truman supported the establishment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), an ultimately nuclear-armed military alliance against the Soviet Union and its East European satellites.

If the Cold War lived up to its billing in Europe, the Far East proved to be a region of far more volatile superpower rivalry. After China's civil war reignited following the Japanese defeat, the Truman administration had backed Chiang Kai Shek's corrupt and incompetent Nationalists against the communist guerrillas led by Chairman Mao Zedong.

When the latter prevailed in 1949, the controversy over 'Who lost China?' became a cause celebre for anti-communist Republicans over the following years.

Moreover, Truman's handling of the war in Korea dogged his final years. The conduct of General MacArthur on the battlefield during the winter of 1950-51 constituted arguably the most serious act of insubordination against an American commander-in-chief in American history. Repeatedly critical of the administration in press statements, MacArthur

was determined to take the war into China itself, overthrowing Mao's communist regime. He would later reveal in his memoirs that he wanted to use a total of 26 atomic bombs against North Korea and China.

Even so, MacArthur's dismissal by Truman, although well within the presidential prerogative, was highly unpopular. Returning to the United States, MacArthur later made a 34-minute address to a joint session of Congress, condemned by Truman as "nothing but a bunch of damn bullshit." But seven million Americans cheered MacArthur's ticker tape parade through New York in April 1951.

Truman was hugely frustrated by the costly war, which ultimately killed 35,000 American soldiers and nearly two million Koreans, and once again his approval ratings plummeted. He left office in January 1953 and in the following years, travelled the world extensively, publishing his memoirs in a collection titled *Mr Citizen* in 1960.

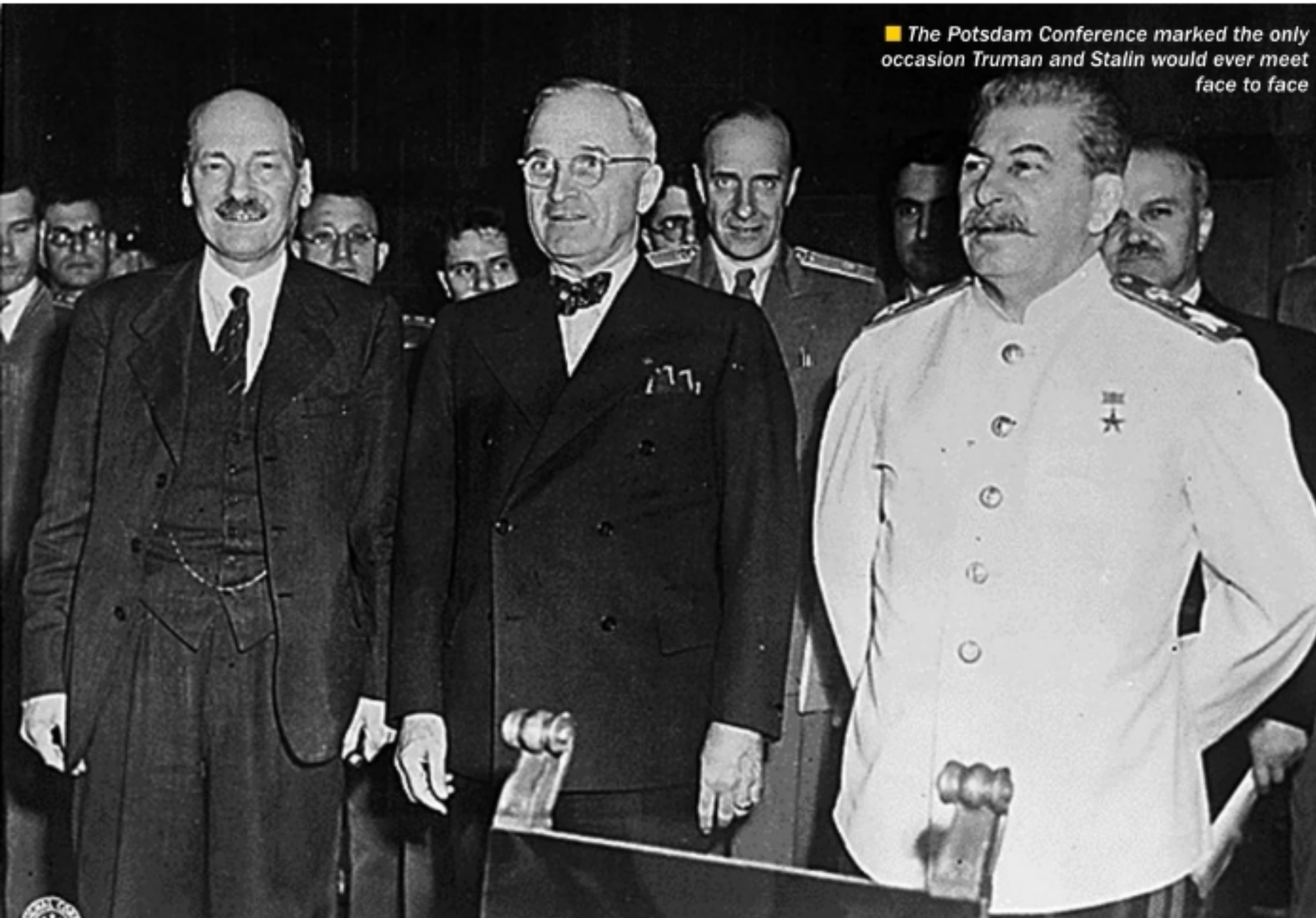
By the time of his death 12 years later, it was widely recognised that his administration had profoundly changed the United States and the wider world.

## THE ATOMIC BOMBINGS

The decision to unleash the atomic bomb against imperial Japan has always been Truman's most controversial policy decision: the blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed at least 130,000 Japanese civilians and left an enduring legacy of radioactive contamination. It has been argued that Truman's only alternative to using the atomic bomb would have been a brutal island-by-island invasion of Japan, costing hundreds of thousands of young American lives as millions of fanatical subjects rallied to the emperor. But by spring of 1945, Japan was cut off from South East Asia's oil supplies, its fleets crippled, its seas and skies open to attack and the air force resorting to desperate kamikaze suicide attacks. Declassified documents now indicate that Truman and his advisors had estimated a combined siege and naval blockade together with non-atomic bombings had at least a chance of forcing a Japanese surrender before November, and the proposed commencement of Operation Olympic, the invasion of Kyushu. But other declassified documents now reveal that Stalin, in violation of the Yalta Agreements, wanted his rapidly advancing forces to occupy Hokkaido. Moreover the Red Army did not stop advancing until the official Japanese surrender on 2 September and already controlled large parts of Manchuria and Korea. The atomic bombings almost certainly represented less the end of WWII as the beginning of the Cold War, the ultimate gesture of US military might designed to unnerve the Soviets.



■ The atomic mushroom cloud rises over Hiroshima in August 1945



■ The Potsdam Conference marked the only occasion Truman and Stalin would ever meet face to face

### AID FOR EUROPE

Truman asks for \$17 billion in grants and loans over four years for the European Recovery Program, aka the Marshall Plan. This strategy depended on bipartisan support in an ideologically polarised era.

June 1947

### CIVIL RIGHTS PROGRAM

Without prior consultation, Truman calls on Congress to enact an anti-lynching law and legislation to prohibit segregation on interstate trains, buses, planes and in the military. This move angers many southern Democrats.

2 February 1948

### COLD WAR IN EUROPE

Truman proclaims the North Atlantic Pact, which had been signed by 12 nations in Washington in April. The pact was entrusted to a newly formed organisation – the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).

24 August 1949

### MACARTHUR IS DISMISSED

The supreme commander of the UN task force in Korea, General Douglas MacArthur, is informed by brown envelope of his dismissal while at his residence in Tokyo. He is replaced shortly after by Lt General Matthew Ridgway.

11 April 1951

### EISENHOWER TAKES OVER

Truman attends the inauguration of Dwight D Eisenhower, who had previously worked for Truman at NATO and whose campaign had been strongly critical of the outgoing president's record on Korea and domestic corruption scandals.

20 January 1953

### DIES IN MISSOURI

Truman is 88 when he dies. By this time he had instituted a presidential library and published his memoirs during his retirement. In 1960 he had campaigned successfully for John F Kennedy. His wife Bess died in 1982 at the age of 97.

26 December 1972



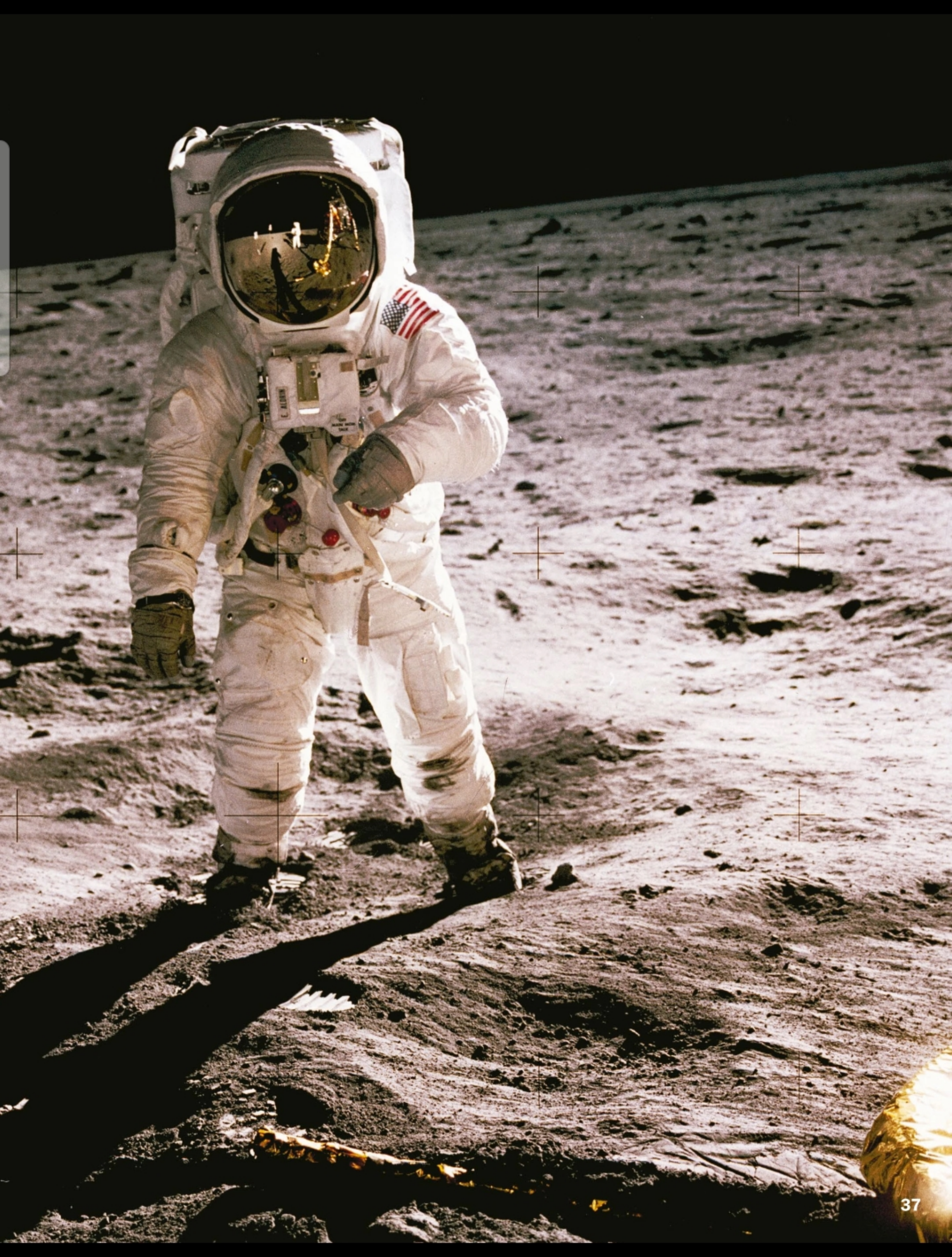
# A WAR FOR HEARTS & MINDS

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# THE OPENING EXCHANGES

AS THE DIVIDE BETWEEN THE USSR AND THE WEST INCREASED, A SERIES OF EVENTS AROUND THE WORLD WOULD TAKE THE CONFLICT TO NEW AND TERRIFYING HEIGHTS

**E**ven as the flags of the Third Reich were torn down and the final embers of World War II began to cool, the fragile trust between the Allies was already splintering. One shadow had been driven from Europe, but another was beginning to form in the eyes of the West – a red menace, one that was swallowing territories and nations behind an iron curtain that stretched high, far and deep.

To the Soviets, the West was a decadent, greedy collective that thought itself above the people of Russia and their great sacrifice during the six long years of World War II. Neither wished to engage the other in full-on warfare – the scars of WWII ran deep, after all – but the willingness to do so, that potency of that unspoken threat, would drive what became the Cold War.

As a decades-long battle of political sparring, military tensions and espionage, the Cold War was unlike any other conflict the world had faced. It ran on fear and propaganda, conjuring a terror that filled the imaginations of every man, woman and child: nuclear war. Yet, while it represented one of the most unconventional wars in history, it almost transformed into all-out bloodshed on many occasions.

These were flashpoints in the history of the 20th century – political, economical and militaristic pivots upon which the fate of the world was placed. From the Korean War to the crisis at the Suez Canal, these events were the Cold War burning at its hottest, one political disaster or military power play away from a third global conflict. As tensions rose to new heights between the expanding might of the Soviet Union and the communism-fearing collective of the West, the world watched with bated breath as the most powerful men on the planet came to blows...





★  
**AS TENSIONS ROSE TO NEW HEIGHTS  
BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE WEST,  
THE WORLD WATCHED WITH BATED BREATH**  
★





## THE BERLIN BLOCKADE

The embers of World War II had barely cooled before the Cold War began with the subdivision of Germany and Berlin

The war was barely over and a new conflict was already beginning to form. Adolf Hitler was dead and the Nazi war machine had been driven back into Germany and beaten into submission. The Allies were victorious, but that victory hid a division that had been growing since the tide of the war turned against the Reich. As already agreed at the Yalta Conference, the Allies divided Germany into four sectors: the largest was taken by the USSR, claimed in the name of the sheer human sacrifice it had made in defending Stalingrad and pursuing the Nazis.

The rest of the fallen nation was divided between the other largest members of the Allies – France, Britain and the United States. Berlin was also divided in much the same way, despite residing well within the zone occupied by the Soviet Union. However, despite the image of cooperation shown to the media, those tensions hadn't abated – in fact, they were growing hotter with every passing day – and with the positioning and the division of the German capital proving the first political salvo of what soon became the Cold War, those divisions were about to split even further.

The Soviet presence was not a welcome one in Germany. In Berlin especially, the elections of 1946 saw the German people vote overwhelmingly in favour of non-communist candidates; for Stalin and rest of the Party in Moscow, it was proof positive of a democratic plan to poison the future of a true, united

Germany under communism. In 1947, those Soviet fears were taken to new heights when Britain and the United States decided that Germany needed a new currency if it was to enter the economy of a post-war world.

By 1947, what would later become West Germany was seeing a huge influx of German citizens, driven across the borders as the Soviet Union began actively expelling those of German ancestry from areas in East Germany (by 1950, around 12 million people had fled the Soviet zone). The Soviet refusal to provide supplies for these exiles only urged the Allies to act with greater expediency, and in the first half of 1948 France, the US and Britain met in London to discuss the German question, resulting in creation of that new currency, and of a new democratic nation: West Germany.

The Soviet response to these meetings was swift and resolute. On 28 March 1948, all traffic passing through the Soviet zone was now subject to mandatory searches. The Soviet control over the railways was tightened to a chokehold, forcing Britain, France and the US to reschedule all military supplies to travel by air instead of rail. This 'Little Lift' was just the beginning as Soviet fighter jets started flying into West Berlin airspace, harassing or 'buzzing' military and commercial aircraft. When the Allies introduced the newly minted Deutsche Mark on 18 June 1948, the Soviets took it as an act of economic war.

In truth, the Soviet blockade had begun as soon as it began tightening its control of East Germany, but by 25 June the Soviets had cut off all food supplies to non-Soviet areas of Berlin and shut off all electricity. All roads were closed and that hold on the railways forced train travel to a standstill. As the Soviets began the blockade of Berlin, West Berlin had 36

days' worth of food to maintain its population and panic was setting in. That panic grew all the worse when West Berliners realised the 1.5 million-strong Soviet army greatly outnumbered the stripped back, post-war forces of Britain, France the United States.

It was a stalemate, with the Soviets believing they could force the West to abandon Berlin for good and the West refusing to believe Stalin would risk a Third World War. Refusing to leave West Berlin to wither, and assured the Soviets would not go as far as to shoot Western planes out of the sky, the US and Britain started an airlift. Co-ordinating with the RAF, the US Air Force began flying in supplies, with planes touching down every three minutes. It was a huge undertaking with more than 5,000 tons of food and coal being flown in daily to keep West Berlin alive.

The Soviets did all they could to maintain the blockade, but with the USSR unwilling to start a war it was incapable of waging, the West had called Moscow's bluff. The strict blockade on travel, electricity and food supplies held for a staggering 318 days before the Soviets eventually ceased their aggressive manoeuvring. Over almost a year, the West had airlifted more than 2.3 million tons of supplies and ensured democracy wasn't suffocated out of Berlin.

The Berlin Blockade may have come to an end on 12 May 1949, and the airlift on 30 September, but the crisis calcified the Cold War into a confrontation the world now recognised. Being unable to muscle the West out of Berlin entirely, the Soviet Union withdrew behind a newly fortified Iron Curtain. It would set the tone of the conflict to come: two sides daring the other to take that final step and send the world into all-out war.

Only three flight paths to Berlin were made available by the Soviet Union, turning the Berlin Airlift into a procession of British and American planes





■ Apart from the infamous Black Friday, the Berlin Airlift ran like clockwork as the Soviets continued to enforce the blockade



## BLACK FRIDAY AND THE AIRLIFTS

Keeping West Berlin's head above the surface was a monumental task for the West, and it almost came crashing down on one fateful day

Supporting half a city full of two million potentially starving German citizens (a population that had swollen with the men, women and children driven over the border from Soviet-controlled East Germany) was no simple challenge and it tasked the West with co-ordinating an aerial supply chain that would have to keep moving around the clock.

The city required a daily food ration of 646 tons of flour and wheat, 109 tons of meat and fish, 180 tons of sugar, 5 tons of whole milk, 64 tons of fat, 180 tons of dehydrated potatoes, 11 tons of coffee, 125 tons of cereal, 19 tons of powdered milk, 3 tons of fresh yeast for baking, 144 tons of dehydrated vegetables, 38 tons of salt and 10 tons of cheese. Vast quantities of coal and fuel were also needed.

With over 275,000 flights in total used to maintain the supply lines, and keep democracy alive in the German capital, the operation constantly walked a knife edge. The true test of the airlift campaign came on Friday 13 August 1948 when rain clouds hung so heavy over Berlin, pilots could barely see the sky in front of them. With rain lashing down, a C-54 cargo plane laden with supplies crashed and exploded, while a second burst its tyres and almost crashed just trying to avoid it. A third plane barely escaped calamity when it misjudged its position and landed on a half-constructed runway.

Within minutes, the high turnover of planes meant a high chance of mid-air collisions. Ground control immediately grounded any planes currently being unloaded and advised those heading in to pull away while the weather held. Fortunately, no one was killed, but it was a stark reminder just how quickly such an operation could go wrong.





## THE KOREAN WAR

When North Korea poured troops south across the 38th parallel border, the Cold War faced its first true military campaign

The prelude to the Korean War began just after World War II reached its bloody climax. The Japanese Empire, once the proud supporter of Hitler's Third Reich and the most feared power in Asia, had been crushed by the atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945 and the aggressive drive of the US assault in the Pacific. With Japan brought to heel, the Allies began holding summits to decide what should be done with the nation and its many conquered territories. One such territory was the historical state of Korea.

Bordered by China, Korea had been a colony held under Japanese rule since the 19th century and formed a key part of the Japanese


Empire's strong territorial portfolio in the Pacific. After 35 years of colonial control, the Allies agreed to look after the territory while it prepared a road to eventual independence. As with Germany following the end of the war, Korea was divided into sectors – the north fell under the supervision of the Soviet Union while the south became the responsibility of the United States.

Under the Soviets, a Stalinist government was established with the political figurehead of Kim Il-sung chosen as its supreme leader. Communism was infused into every branch of new government, while a standing army was bolstered by Russian weaponry and artillery. The Soviets were determined to establish a key communist state in the Pacific in the wake of World War II and North Korea was the perfect proxy to hold back the democratic influence of the US in the region.

The United States had a tougher task in establishing a government in the south. A number of political parties and groups were vying for power in the wake of Japan's withdrawal, and the man the US eventually backed – Syngman Rhee – was deeply anti-communist and felt force was needed to bring Korea into one unified state. With the Soviet-backed Democratic People's Republic of Korea pointing its shells towards the Republic of Korea in the south, the tensions were bound to boil over into all-out conflict.

By the spring of 1950, Kim Il-sung had successfully convinced Stalin to support a military invasion that would unite Korea once more and create an even stronger communist state in the Pacific. Believing the south to be weakened from the guerilla attacks and the US withdrawal, Stalin signed off on a Soviet-supported invasion that would also use troops and weaponry from Chairman Mao and the People's Republic of China. Stalin saw the benefit in creating a socialist power base in Asia, but refused to let Russian troops take part to avoid an open war with the US.

The North Korean invasion caught the US and Britain completely off guard, with the US scrambling to recall peacekeeping forces from Japan to meet the DPRK armies as it rolled into South Korea. However, the small force wasn't



**BY 1950, KIM IL-SUNG HAD SUCCESSFULLY  
CONVINCED STALIN TO SUPPORT A MILITARY  
INVASION THAT WOULD REUNITE KOREA**

■ North Korea's armies were bolstered by veterans serving in China and weaponry supplied by Stalin and the Soviet Union



well-equipped enough to deal with a Soviet-backed army that had been training in secret for months. The DPRK moved towards the vital port of Pusan, forcing the US, Britain and Australia to send forces to hold them off. The United Nations sanctioned the response and the forces of the West gathered at the Pusan bridgehead to hold them back.

The fall back into open warfare shocked the West, but it was soon consolidating its forces, forcing the DPRK to retreat across the 38th parallel with a mixture of key sea-based landings and the dominance of the US Air Force in the skies. The Western forces, now acting under the sanction of the United Nations, had North Korea on the retreat, but they hadn't considered on one formidable factor rising from beyond the North Korean border: China.

As the US forces pushed towards the Manchurian border, news came that Peking would not tolerate Western forces so close to its territory and would act immediately to protect its sovereignty. It seemed a bizarre notion that China would risk engaging the US in open warfare, but under the pretence of a threat to its borders, China launched its armies in November 1950 and sent the UN into disarray. The sheer onslaught of the Chinese

attack drove the South Korean army and those of the UN back across the 38th parallel, helping the DPRK push its foes back as far as the South Korean capital, Seoul.

But with more US and British troops landed by the spring of 1951, the UN began forcing the Chinese and the North Koreans back over the 38th parallel. Rather than being overzealous and pushing further, the UN forces held the line at the Korean Division and for the next two years the conflict descended into an exchange of artillery blows across the border. It was here the 38th parallel went from a patrolled line to a heavily fortified no man's land littered with mines and barbed wire.

The Chinese eventually withdrew their forces, while the Soviets sat back and raised their hands in innocence of any involvement. By its conclusion, the conflict had claimed more than 2.5 million lives, including citizens killed in air raid bombings and artillery fire. North Korea would become more insular as a result, distanced from foreign powers as it attempted to build its own vision of a new communist future. For the West, the Korean War had been a costly battle, but one that had made a statement to the powers of China and the USSR: military aggression would not be tolerated, even if it meant war.

## NORTH KOREA AND THE CHINESE CIVIL WAR

Before China's timely intervention in the Korean War, North Korea would come to its aid during a grisly civil conflict

Chairman Mao's decision to aid North Korea in the war against its neighbour and the forces of the West may have seemed like a militaristic bolt out of the blue, but it was the product of a relationship that had been forged in another conflict. As the newly formed Democratic People's Republic of Korea looked across its northern border to the People's Republic of China, it saw the larger communist state engulfed in a civil conflict that threatened to tear the nation asunder.

The war itself, which raged between the CPC (Communist Party of China) and the Kuomintang (Nationalist) party from 1927 onwards, ceased when Japan invaded in 1937 and conquered Manchuria during World War II, but resumed soon after the end of the war as the two rival governments fought for total control of China's future. Seeing fellow communists struggling against the Chinese nationalists, North Korea began sending supplies and communist soldiers to its forces in Manchuria, eventually helping Mao and the CPC to defeat the Nationalists by the end of 1949.

North Korea's intervention might not have been the most dramatic of moves, but the gesture was not forgotten by the newly formed People's Republic of China. In thanks, Mao returned between 50,000 and 70,000 Korean veterans who served in the PLA to bolster the North Korean armies (a contribution that would serve the DPRK well in the conflict to come). China also promised to support North Korea should it ever decide to invade South Korea – a factor that would come into play when the invasion to come turned against the DPRK.





### THE SUEZ CRISIS

As the Cold War continued to command the attention of the world, a new crisis arose in Egypt

On 26 July 1956, President Nasser of Egypt nationalised the Suez Canal. This single act would change the fates of many a nation and alter the political landscape of the world forever. It provoked threats of nuclear war, broke and made political careers, and saw Britain surpassed by a new Western superpower: the US. In the long years of the Cold War, the Suez Crisis would prove a turning point for every nation involved.

A driven political leader, Nasser was becoming the face of the Arab world. He had great plans for Egypt, and with a landslide national vote in his favour following a bloodless overthrow of King Farouk I and the monarchy, the tactical neutralist looked to reshape his home. The US and Britain supported Nasser's new government, believing his anti-communist stance would help stem the potential tide of socialism spreading through the Arab world. However, Egypt was locked in a battle of wills with the newly formed state of Israel, forcing Nasser to seek arms and funding from overseas to modernise his armies.

The US agreed, but placed tight sanctions the Egyptian leader refused to accept. And so he turned to the Soviet Union, which was more than willing to supply Nasser with the arms and artillery needed to protect his nation from Israeli attacks in exchange for a deferred payment of grain. Despite this deal, the US and Britain were determined to bring Nasser on side and offered \$270 million worth of funding to help finalise the construction of the powerful new Aswan High Dam. The future was indeed looking bright for Egypt, with support from both sides of the Cold War.

However, when the US and Britain heard that the Soviets had approached Nasser with a \$1.12 billion deal at 2% interest for the construction of the dam, the two powers withdrew their offers. The Soviet deal never materialised, and with US and British funding now off the table, the need for drastic action had come. Without the dam, Egypt would continue to suffer heavy flooding from the Nile, so the neutralist Nasser was forced to make a decision that would send his nation, and the rest of the world, into crisis. His attention turned to one place: the Suez Canal.

Built by the Suez Canal Company and officially opened in 1869, the 120.11-mile-long stretch of water charged tolls for all the ships that passed through from the North Atlantic to the Indian Oceans, making it a considerable source of income for its owners. Nasser saw the Suez Canal as an opportunity that could not be passed up and quickly declared martial law in the canal zone. Seizing control of the Suez Canal Company, he promised his people the money made from the tolls would provide all the funds Egypt needed to build the dam in just five years. However, both the British and French governments had a vested interest in the region and feared that Nasser would cut off their vital supply of oil from the Persian Gulf.

When talks with Nasser failed to relieve the Egyptian hold on the Suez Canal, Britain and France turned to a new ally in the region: Israel. The Jewish state was one of Egypt's biggest political adversaries and the two had exchanged small military attacks over the years that had only exacerbated their adversarial relationship. Realising that invading Egypt would be seen as an act of war that the United Nations would never sanction, the UK and France used Israel as a proxy. So when Israel sent ten brigades into the Suez region on 29 October 1956 to rout the Egyptian forces stationed there, France and Britain stepped in to formally request a ceasefire and the withdrawal of both Israeli and Egyptian forces.

On 5 and 6 November, French and British forces landed at Port Fuad and Port Said and pushed both the Israelis and Egyptians back, in effect occupying the area themselves. However, the rash decision to move forces into the Suez Canal was almost unanimously condemned, both at home and among other nations, with both the USSR and the US calling for the UN to request the two nations leave the canal zone immediately. The Soviet Union, aware that its interests in the Middle East were now under threat from the occupation by two of Europe's most powerful nations, even went as far as threatening the use of nuclear warfare.

Starting out as a domestic issue, the Suez Canal situation had escalated into a crisis that threatened to upend the alliances of the Cold War. Both Britain and France were reluctant to withdraw their forces, but the United Nations could not risk the incident turning into all-out warfare with the Soviets threatening to intervene on its own terms, so it began evacuating French and British forces from the region on 22 December 1956. Three months later, the Israelis followed suit.



■ The Suez Canal was hugely important to the British and French governments due to the amount of oil transported through it from the Persian Gulf



■ Sea carriers, such as the HMS Eagle pictured here, helped the British and French stage a quick military response in Egypt





**BRITAIN AND FRANCE'S RASH DECISION  
TO MOVE FORCES INTO THE SUEZ CANAL  
WAS ALMOST UNANIMOUSLY CONDEMNED**

## SUEZ CRISIS: THE AFTERMATH

With Britain and France forced to pull out their forces in shame, the political landscape of the world changed forever



The Suez Crisis was a turning point for every nation involved. For the British it marked the accelerated demise of its Empire as decolonisation ran riot through its overseas territories. Shamed into withdrawing its forces at the express request of the United States

and the USSR, Britain's hold on its colonial extremities was broken forever. France suffered a similar outcome, with its colonies in Africa slowly falling to independence like dominoes.

And while the political alliance of the United States and the USSR over the Suez Crisis seemed like a new dawn for the two opposing

superpowers of the Cold War, the distrust between them ran deeper than ever. For the US, the Middle East was a prime target for Soviet expansion, so President Dwight D Eisenhower asked Congress for authorisation to use military force if requested by any Middle Eastern nation to check aggression. Eisenhower was also able to set aside \$200 million to help Middle Eastern countries that desired aid from the United States in the face of such attacks. Known as the Eisenhower Doctrine, these acts would attempt to stem the tide of Soviet influence in the Middle East.

For the Russians, the Soviet threat to launch a nuclear assault against France and Britain was the key factor that forced the two nations to withdraw from Egypt. Supreme leader Nikita Khrushchev saw the move as a triumph for Soviet power in the political arena and confirmation that the West truly feared the USSR's nuclear capabilities. The Cold War, it seemed, was far from over...



■ Gamal Abdul Nasser, pictured here on the left, saw his administration rise in popularity among other Arab states following the end of the Suez Crisis





# KEY PLAYER: NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV

FROM HUMBLE BEGINNINGS TO THE HIGHEST OFFICE IN THE USSR, KHRUSHCHEV WAS A MAN WHO MADE AN UNMISTAKABLE IMPACT ON THE NATION HE LOVED



Like many of his comrades, Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev grew up in a poor home that often struggled to survive in the paper-thin economy of late 19th century and early 20th century

Russia. Born on 17 April 1894 (5 April, Old Style), he spent his earliest years in one of the nation's poorest villages near the modern Ukrainian border, clocking up a mere four years of formal education. The influence of one teacher – a young, travelling freethinker by the name of Lydia Shevchenko – inspired a new fire in him to learn and achieve.

When Tsar Nicholas II abdicated in 1917, as the Great War was coming to a close, Khrushchev saw that interest draw him into the arms of the new Russian Provisional Government. His experience in hard labour and his origins near Ukraine saw him elected to the position of chairman on the Worker's Union. Despite stepping onto the threshold of Russian government, it took Khrushchev another year to join the radical Bolshevik Party, but that didn't save him from finally seeing military service for his country. With the fall of the monarchy, Russia was being torn apart as factions fought for the control of the nation's political and economic future. Civil war had come to Mother Russia.

Drafted into the Red Army as a political commissar, Khrushchev was now part soldier, part political overseer, ensuring the Bolshevik principles were being followed by recruits amid the bullets, blood and death of the conflict. When the war drew to a close in 1921, Khrushchev was demobilised and returned to the Ukraine to find his home region laid waste by famine, disease and the scars of war. It was a fresh reminder that the conflict had touched every community, but the 27-year-old wasn't about to rest on his laurels and he soon began

helping to reopen a mine that served as the economic heart of the region.

His success with the mine saw him promoted to the new national technical college known as the *tekhnikum*, and while it was an odd pairing (Khrushchev himself often remarked he was a slow learner), his time there only helped to bolster his growing passion for communism and its principles. That passion and drive would see his career start to flourish as he began to ascend through the ranks of the communist regime. Much of that ascendance came under the tutelage of another rising star, Lazar Kaganovich, and with Kaganovich's guidance, Khrushchev soon became a member of the powerful Central Committee in 1934.

Working his way through the ranks of the Communist Party as Kaganovich's protégé also brought Khrushchev to the attention of Joseph Stalin himself. While he was of low birth and status, Khrushchev's previous political successes, his military service in the civil war and the backing of the already trusted Kaganovich opened a door few ever had the opportunity to use – the one that led to Stalin's inner circle. Khrushchev cherished these moments with the Soviet leader, and it led him to devote himself fully to one of Stalin's most shocking acts: the purges. Stalin's rise to power fostered a deep sense of paranoia, leading him to execute millions of Russian citizens and send countless men and women to the gulags in Siberia. It was a cause Khrushchev dedicated himself to, increasing his favour with the Russian leader, but it would leave a dark stain on his soul.

The rise of the German Nazi party and the outbreak of World War II in 1939 saw Khrushchev once again thrust into the chaos of war, but with Stalin's patronage he was now one of the most powerful party commissars in the Red Army. He oversaw the USSR's

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**WORKING HIS WAY THROUGH THE RANKS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY BROUGHT HIM TO THE ATTENTION OF JOSEPH STALIN**  
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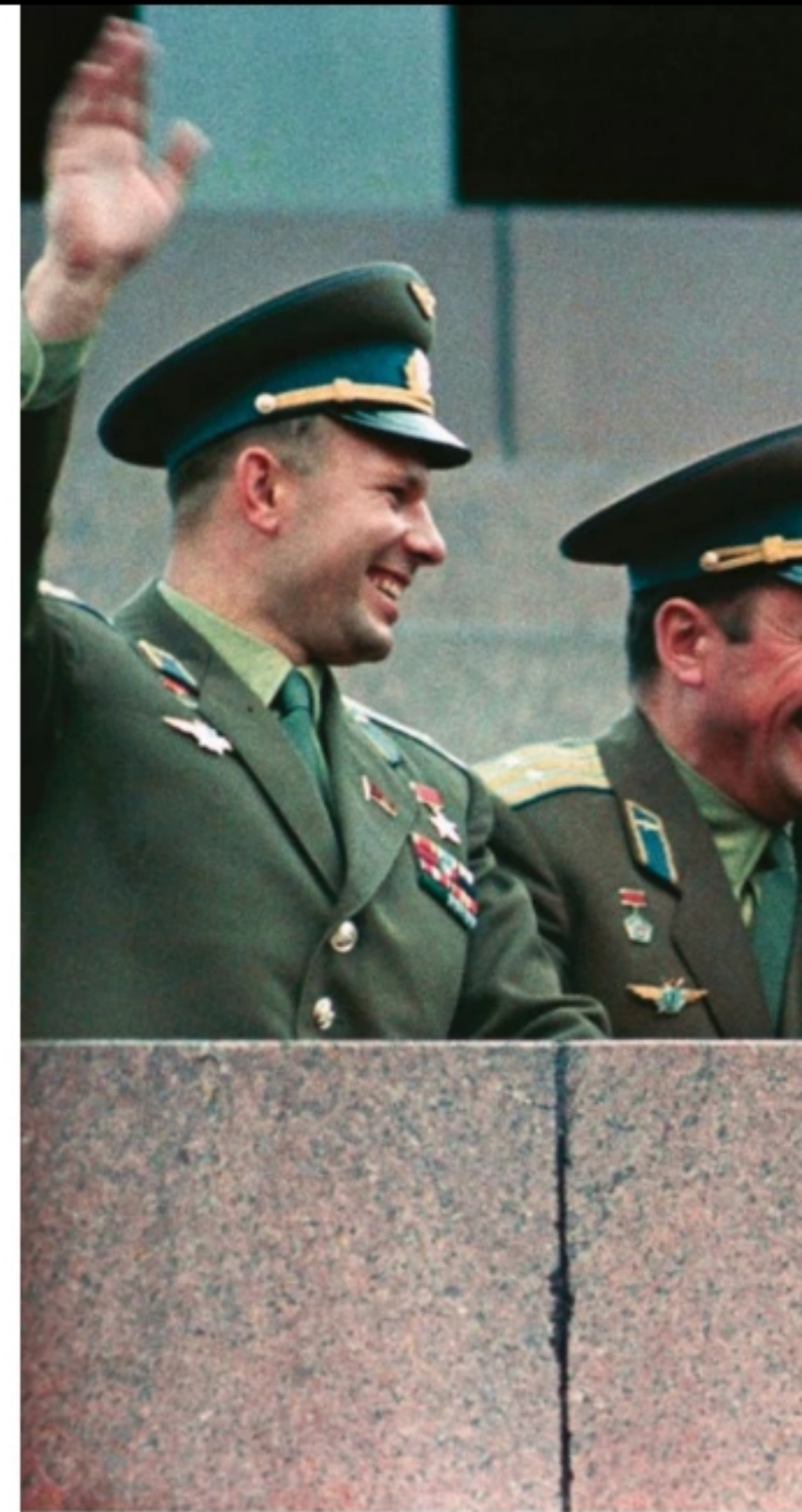


■ Khrushchev's association with Stalin was instrumental in his rise within the party, and it would define his career forever





■ While Khrushchev's involvement in the Battle of Stalingrad was limited, his association with the event was a point of pride for many years to come



annexation of eastern Poland (which includes part of modern-day Ukraine) and the formation of Western Ukraine. While he was still posted in Kiev, the treaty of non-aggression between Germany and the Soviet Union crumbled. The ensuing German invasion left hundreds of thousands of Red Army soldiers dead and Stalin's now legendary might as a leader humiliated. It would be the sight of Russia's military back breaking on the knee of the Nazi war machine that finally broke the spell of Khrushchev's devotion to Stalin.

The years that followed the end of the war saw Khrushchev faced with the unending battle between his love for the party and sheer devastation left in the wake of the conflict. Khrushchev spent many years attempting to rebuild the infrastructure of the Ukraine, while imposing the will of his Soviet masters in Moscow. With many a failed harvest to contend with, and the shadow of the bloody purges still fresh in the minds of the people, Khrushchev would eventually be called back to the capital. Stalin's mind was beginning to unravel and a power play was already forming within the heart of the Politburo.

Following Stalin's death in 1953, the Soviet Union found itself on the brink of another

civil conflict. With such a powerful presence removed, the scramble for control saw political factions rally behind the most influential figures in Moscow. Now operating in the capital, Khrushchev's popularity and growing political skills saw him use his influence to isolate those figures and groups who had opposed his rise to power in the past. And it was here, as he consolidated his position and rose to the head of the party, that Khrushchev's true doubt in Stalin's vision began to manifest.

For many, it seemed an about-turn; one of Stalin's most dedicated followers was gradually becoming one of his most prominent detractors. But, for Khrushchev, who had seen the cracks in Stalin's fantastical persona years earlier, the need to heal the nation was too great a task not to recognise. On 24 February 1956, Khrushchev made one of the most important acts of his political career – the Secret Speech. Stunning the members of the 20th Communist Party Congress, Khrushchev openly expressed his desire to 'de-Stalinise' the country and begin a new era of rehabilitation.

It was a bold move, and set the tone for the administration that would follow. Khrushchev was a man who envisioned the Soviet Union

emerging from the darkness of Stalin's era into a new age of cultural and economic growth. His decision to release thousands of prisoners locked away in the Siberian gulags and forced labour camps showed a conscious decision to humanise the USSR. His relaxation laws on free expression attempted to counteract the image of the Soviet Union as a cold and callous state.

These were positive moves for many, and included his enthusiastic support of the Russian space programme (which led to it beating the US to the first manned orbit of the Earth on 12 April 1961). His success in the space race gave Khrushchev a powerful belief in his own potential, and led to a programme to kick-start Russia's stalled agriculture industry that failed spectacularly as the economy continued to worsen. This erratic approach to policy would ultimately be Khrushchev's undoing, as a dissident movement within the Communist Party began to form.

This dissidence only worsened as relations with outside powers deteriorated. Khrushchev's decision to erect the Berlin Wall in 1961 proved to the world that the USSR's liberal domestic changes had done little to alter its view on international relations, while the shooting down of a US U-2 spy plane the year before and the decision to place nuclear missiles on Cuban soil to deter US forces from harassing Cuban affairs would lead to the biggest crisis of the Cold War era. Khrushchev's personality made him an unusual opponent for foreign leaders – he was affable in person and expressed a genuine desire to improve relations with the West, but was known to flit to cold anger and threats in the blink of an eye. He was a complex

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**KHRUSHCHEV OPENLY EXPRESSED HIS DESIRE TO DE-STALINISE THE COUNTRY AND BEGIN A NEW ERA OF REHABILITATION**  
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■ One of Khrushchev's greatest legacies was his wholehearted support of Russia's space programme and cosmonauts such as Yuri Gagarin (far left)



man who had inherited the seat of a leader who craved power and infamy, and it proved a difficult shadow to emerge from.

And, as with every leader to assume the highest seat of office in the Soviet Union, Khrushchev's time eventually came to end. In October 1964 he was ousted by a faction of political opponents who felt his liberal domestic policies and poor economic decisions warranted a change of face. Fortunately for a man who had fallen so out of favour, Khrushchev's career was not cut short by a trip to the gulags or an assassin's bullet. As a testament to the popularity of his earlier years in the party, the aging politician was given a pension and an apartment in Moscow where he was allowed to live out the last decade of his life in relative peace. He passed away on 11 September 1971, finally succumbing to a bout of heart disease.



## KEY MOMENTS

Three major events that affected Khrushchev's career

**1925**

### Meeting Kaganovich

When Khrushchev met Lazar Moiseyevich Kaganovich in 1925, it transformed the young Russian's life. Kaganovich was one of Stalin's closest associates, and by taking Khrushchev under his wing, Kaganovich welcomed him into the party and served as a powerful ally in the Soviet political arena. That association would only help to foster the relationship to come with Stalin.

**25 FEBRUARY 1956**

### The Secret Speech

Following his appointment as First Secretary of the Central Committee, Khrushchev began a political shift that few people saw coming. The liberalisation of his views were calcified in the Secret Speech, where he denounced many of Stalin's policies including the purges and the 'cult of personality' that the former Soviet leader had used to bring Russia into some of its darkest years.

**14 OCTOBER 1964**

### Fall from power

From his association with Stalin, and the subsequent distancing he made with the Secret Speech, Khrushchev's move towards Leninism and a more liberal political stance made him both an erratic leader and a target for a new movement against him. His removal from power didn't end in bloodshed though – a testament to his popularity in the party.



# LIFE IN THE SHADOW OF THE COLD WAR

FOR FOUR DECADES, COLD WAR POLITICS AND THE FEAR OF THE BOMB INFILTRATED THE LIVES OF ORDINARY CITIZENS AT WORK AND AT HOME

**I**n the view of some historians, the Third World War has actually already taken place and was actually just that: a war in the 'third world'. Between the late-1940s and late-1980s, the superpowers sought to 'outsource' the job of fighting each other directly – not an option with thousands of nuclear warheads pointed at each other's cities – to various proxy battlefields in the developing world.

Thus for the several million citizens of the 'first' and 'second worlds', the Cold War was something that rumbled away in the background of their lives.

The morning paper or evening news might run with accounts of the Berlin Wall's erection in mid-1961, nuclear arms talks between Presidents Nixon and Brezhnev or revelations about spy rings and defections. Meanwhile work and family life went on.

But the Cold War did touch ordinary citizens. Compulsory military service ensured the United States of America, Europe and the Warsaw Pact sent hundreds of thousands of its young men to various Cold War battlefields.

The three largest such flashpoints – Korea (1950-53), Vietnam (1946-75) and Afghanistan (1979-89) – killed tens of thousands of soldiers and sent millions of veterans home with profound consequences for their families and wider society.

Cold War considerations often affected education and employment prospects. Involvement in a strike, popular protest or political campaign could elicit secret monitoring from an intelligence agency. And the Cold War could even invade the home: fear of communism or nuclear attack regularly cropped up in novels, movies and even pop music.

The ultimate nightmare of the era, that civilisation might one day vanish beneath a thermo-nuclear fireball, was often a hard one to avoid.

## SPY RINGS AND INTELLIGENCE GATHERING

With Nazism comprehensively destroyed in Europe, relations between the Soviet Union and the West soon soured. In the late-1940s, Western fears that the heirs of Lenin were as

good as their rhetoric, intent on colouring the world Bolshevik red, seemed to be coming true.

In September 1945, a defecting clerk from the Soviet embassy provided a tranche of documents proving that Moscow was actively recruiting agents in the West. Public anxiety was stoked by the 1948 perjury conviction of the former diplomat Alger Hiss in connection with spying charges. In June 1953, governmental employees Julius and Ethel Rosenberg went to the electric chair, convicted of espionage.

That same year, the Korean War armistice was signed: when UN and communist POWs were exchanged, 22 American and one British soldier elected to accompany their erstwhile captors back to China.

In October 1962, John Vassall, a former staffer at the British Embassy in Moscow, later employed by the Admiralty's Navy Intelligence Agency, was sentenced to 18 years' imprisonment after a defecting KGB officer exposed him as having passed thousands of documents to the Soviets. In an era where homosexuality carried a lengthy prison sentence, Vassall was being blackmailed by the KGB: during his Moscow posting, they had lured him to a party, drugged him and photographed him in compromising positions with some sailors.

The Wisconsin Senator Joseph McCarthy mesmerised his audience with warnings of a vast network of Red subversion across the United States.

The KGB recruited spies working on or near the Manhattan Project, tasked with building the USA's atomic bomb. One such spy, David Greenglass, brother of Ethel Rosenberg, had actually worked at the atomic laboratory in Los Alamos, New Mexico.

In the 1940s, the terrible cruelty and ineptitude of the communist system was not yet fully apparent. Across the world, many educated and privileged people saw it as a viable alternative to a capitalist system that had led to two world wars and a depression.

In May 1961, George Blake, a senior MI6 operative formerly stationed in West Berlin, was sentenced to 42 years imprisonment on charges of espionage. In October 1966, Blake was sprung from Wormwood Scrubs prison, eventually resurfacing in Moscow. Blake claimed that his experiences as a POW in North Korea, witnessing the terrible civilian suffering

■ A scene from Peter Watkins' *The War Game*, a mock documentary made in 1965 that the BBC didn't broadcast for 20 years







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**INVOLVEMENT IN A STRIKE, POPULAR  
PROTEST OR POLITICAL CAMPAIGN  
COULD ELICIT SECRET MONITORING  
FROM AN INTELLIGENCE AGENCY**  
★



wrought by US Air Force bombings, converted him to the communist cause.

Then there was the example of the 'Cambridge Five', a spy ring recruited in Cambridge during the 1930s. As late as 1979, the British public were shocked to learn that one of their number, Anthony Blunt, had been the surveyor of the queen's pictures.

None of the others – Don MacLean, Guy Burgess, Kim Philby or John Cairncross – had seemed likely candidates for espionage either: Burgess was an old Etonian and Philby the son of an imperial civil servant.

In many ways, however, the worldwide reach and appeal of Marxism-Leninism was much exaggerated. The caricature of a Red tide spreading across the globe scarcely accounted for the deep schisms and rivalries within the international communist movement itself, most notably the Sino-Soviet split of the 1950s.

Many 'communist' leaders in the Third World were really opportunistic nationalists, spouting Marxist rhetoric in the hope that money and weapons would flow from Moscow.

Most of the 'brainwashed' Korean War POWs were back in the United States by 1960, bitterly disillusioned with Maoist China.

Moreover, while Senator Joseph McCarthy tapped into deep anxieties in the American public, his career ultimately imploded: after eight weeks of televised hearings into his allegations against army personnel in 1954, McCarthy was censured by the US Senate: on television, he came across as a bully and demagogue, smearing innocent Americans and contemptuous of the Bill of Rights.

However, the consequences of being associated with even mildly left-wing causes was not lost on the public: American life in the 1950s was consequently marked by conformity and conservatism.

Successive administrations dragged their feet on Civil Rights legislation and overestimated the USA's willingness to see tens of thousands of its youth die in defence of an unstable anti-communist regime in South Vietnam.

The merest suspicion of communist sympathies could ruin a career almost instantly. In an attempt to assuage public fears of pro-Soviet subversion, President Harry Truman established the Loyalty Review Board in 1947, and within five years 200 federal employees had been dismissed on suspicion of communist leanings.



■ A scene from the 1983 ABC television movie *The Day After*, which depicted a nuclear attack on Kansas



■ Stanley Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove* was one of several high-profile films to satirise the Cold War standoff

In Britain, college graduates entering careers in the Ministry of Defence, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, intelligence services and some sectors of the nuclear industry would be vetted and bound by the Official Secrets Act of 1911. Under Section 1, anyone guilty of betraying state secrets would face a prison sentence "not exceeding 14 years."

Even graduates entering the BBC would have their political affiliations investigated. Until 1985, MI5 maintained 'Room 105' within its head offices where a special assistant to the director of personnel vetted applicants for jobs.

For millions of working-class men, even those who had avoided military service, the Cold War was closer than they realised.

Britain's intelligence services monitored the trade unions, particularly during the widespread industrial unrest of the 1970s. As leader of the Transport and General Workers' Union between 1969 and 1978, Jack Jones was considered one of the most powerful men in the country. A veteran of

the Spanish Civil War, he consistently denied that he was employed by the KGB. Like Hugh Scanlon of the similarly powerful Amalgamated Union of Electrical Workers, Jones was targeted by MI5, his telephone being bugged by the security agency in the early 1970s at the behest of Prime Minister Edward Heath.

The intelligence services kept tabs on hundreds of thousands of citizens involved in political campaigning or simply partaking of a public demonstration. Files were compiled on the Anti-Nazi League, the Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament and Militant. A large, mainly female peace movement arose in the early 1980s, particularly after RAF Greenham in Berkshire was designated as a base for Cruise Missiles to counter the SS-20 missiles that the Soviets had moved into Eastern Europe. The 'peace camp' established by the women around the base perimeter was infiltrated by MI5 although no evidence emerged that communism played a part in their activism.

On both sides of the Atlantic, much intelligence gathering took place largely without public debate or press scrutiny. For many years after its establishment in October 1952, for example, the existence of the National Security Agency (NSA) was never publicly admitted. Government employees routinely dubbed the NSA 'No Such Agency'. One of its operations, code-named 'Minaret', saw the NSA track the communications of journalists, celebrities and Civil Rights leaders who opposed the Vietnam War. The operation was not terminated until May 1975, when the hearings of the Senate Intelligence Committee, chaired by Senator Frank Church, ruled Minaret unconstitutional and possibly illegal.

## FEAR OF THE HOLOCAUST

For some citizens, the spectre of the nuclear blast came early in life. Funded by the US government's civil defence program, the nine-

**ON BOTH SIDES OF THE ATLANTIC,  
MUCH INTELLIGENCE GATHERING  
TOOK PLACE LARGELY WITHOUT  
PUBLIC DEBATE OR PRESS SCRUTINY**



■ American citizens frequently took part in 'Duck and Cover' exercises such as this



minute *Duck And Cover* cartoon introduced American schoolchildren to Bert the Turtle after January 1952. American schools even performed drills where children would drop everything and assume foetal positions in anticipation of the air-raid sirens.

Other endeavours to prepare the public for nuclear war included the 1950 *Survival Under Nuclear Attack* booklet and *Stars For Defence*, a series of public information albums recorded for the US Federal Civil Defence Administration for broadcast on specific dates between 1956 and 1964. These combined music and interviews; featured artists included Bing Crosby, Ertha Kitt and Johnny Mathias.

In Britain, civil defence leaflets dated from 1938, and pamphlets and prepared radio bulletins were assembled in the post-war era.

The most controversial programme was probably 'Protect and Survive', issued by the British government in May 1980.

Booklets, costing 50 pence in peacetime but free during a national emergency, were accompanied by ten cartoons that instructed families on the construction of makeshift shelters along with information on food, sanitation and fallout warnings.

Criticised by the peace movement as sanitising nuclear war as somehow survivable, Protect and Survive was nonetheless predicated on an assumption of several weeks of East-West tensions providing a warning.

## NATIONAL SERVICE

Military service meant a 'hot' Cold War for millions of young men

In 1948, the Selective Services Act required American males aged 18 to 26 to register for 21 months of active service with five years of reserve duty. That same year, Britain's National Service Act required males aged 17 to 21 to serve in the armed forces, although exemptions were granted for essential services such as farming, mining and the merchant navy.

By 1958, two years before National Service ended, over 100,000 British troops – one seventh of the entire force – was stationed in the Middle East or Asia, although the size of the army would be considerably reduced during the 1960s.

National Service frequently put young British men on the front lines of the Cold War: by 1965, 64,000 troops were stationed in West Germany while there was direct confrontation with communist forces in Malaya (1948-60) and Korea (1950-53).

During the Vietnam War, a series of deferments could get a young American male out of active service. These included marriage, mental instability, religious beliefs and a college education. Even so, it is estimated that most of the 3.4 million men who served in 1964-75 were volunteers. The draft was abolished in 1973 after various assessments concluded that a volunteer army would be more effective.



■ A 1971 recruitment poster aimed at encouraging volunteers to join the US army



# THE ROCK WAR

With attention focused on the nuclear arms race and proxy wars in the developing world, the cultural provenance of the Soviet collapse was often overlooked

Early rock stars such as Elvis Presley and the Beatles had an underground following but foreign radio stations were often blocked; by the 1980s, the Soviet authorities spent \$3 billion per year to jam the anti-communist transmissions of the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe.

Although restricted in their lyrical content, songwriters often made oblique criticisms of the communist system. The Soviet authorities did tolerate local and foreign pop considered apolitical. In March 1980, 'Spring Rhythms' held in Tbilisi, Georgia, was the Soviet Union's first rock festival.

Later, as Mikhail Gorbachev's perestroika reforms took effect, punk and new wave groups began to be more critical of the system. In May 1979 Elton John became the first Western rock star to play in the Soviet Union. Over the next few years, acts like Santana, Billy Joel and James Taylor would follow.

Elton John was the first western rock musician to play gigs in the Soviet Union



In such a scenario, key civil servants would be discreetly instructed to report to underground bunkers that would function as 'regional seats' of government during and after the attack. Certain roads, air and sea ports might fall under military jurisdiction. Peacetime civil liberties would likely be suspended.

Evacuation plans also existed: an internal memo from 1953 estimated that 5 million Britons could be sent to the countryside with 4 million following. Government plans in 1962 provided for the evacuation of approximately 10 million people from 19 cities.

In the United States, CBS broadcast *A Day Called X* in December 1957, a documentary film that showed the implementation of civil defence protocols in Portland Oregon should a Soviet air attack be imminent.

It had been similar to 'Operation Greenlight' in 1955. Directed from Kelly Butte Bunker, the local Emergency Operations Centre, Greenlight managed to evacuate Portland's city centre in 19 minutes with the use of trucks, cars and designated dispersal points. By 1983, President Ronald Reagan had announced a \$10

billion budget for the existing Crisis Relocation Plan. This described a three-day plan to evacuate urban centres to rural 'host' areas.

Soviet citizens were also issued booklets on civil defence, though only after 1954 did these refer to nuclear attack. An estimated 1,500 bunkers existed in the Soviet Union by the 1980s, capable of holding 175,000 personnel.

But the authorities, East and West, had few illusions about how little 'post-attack' contingency plans would match the reality of a nuclear holocaust. While still chancellor of the exchequer in the mid 1950s, Harold MacMillan admitted that, "We cannot hope to emerge from a global war except in ruins."

A pair of young boys pose with a private nuclear bunker in rural England, the like of which was sold by several companies in the 1980s



In October 1968, the Ministry of Defence produced a speculative scenario describing the country following multiple nuclear strikes. Divided into 12 zones of "wretched and desperate survivors," Britain would in theory be governed by a War Cabinet housed in the massive 'Turnstile' bunker under the southern Cotswolds.

In practice, millions of citizens would already be dead and millions more falling victim to untreated injuries, radiation poisoning and epidemics.

Law and order would be a thing of the past, together with electricity, sanitation and basic communications. During the Cold War, it was often opined that should nuclear war ever break out, the luckiest citizens would die instantly.

## NUCLEAR BOMB CULTURE

So insidious was the nightmare of nuclear annihilation that it inevitably left its mark on popular culture. Cold War culture impacted on what audiences could watch. In 1947, the House of Un-American Activities (HUAC) held investigations into the supposed communist affiliations of members of the movie industry.

Convicted of Contempt of Congress, the so-called 'Hollywood Ten' were blacklisted by

**DURING THE COLD WAR, IT WAS OFTEN OPINED THAT SHOULD NUCLEAR WAR EVER BREAK OUT, THE LUCKIEST CITIZENS WOULD DIE INSTANTLY**





■ An anti-Vietnam War protester marches for an amnesty for draft dodgers in the early 1970s

★

**BY CONTRAST, NUCLEAR WAR FICTION WAS CONSISTENTLY APOCALYPTIC. EVEN IN THE 1950S FEW PEOPLE DOUBTED THE APPALLING CONSEQUENCES OF A NUCLEAR EXCHANGE**

★



■ A protester at Greenham Common RAF base is dragged away by the police

the studios for decades. Eventually, more than 300 actors, radio commentators, directors and writers were boycotted: some artists such as Charlie Chaplin, Paul Robeson and Orson Welles relocated abroad.

The activities of HUAC encouraged the studios to back such anti-communist movies as *Guilty Of Treason* (1950), *The Manchurian Candidate* (1962), *The Red Menace* (1949) and *Red Planet Mars* (1952).

With UFO sightings in vogue across 1950s USA, Hollywood science fiction often conflated alien with communist invasion. The gradual subordination of small-town America by vegetable-like pods in *Invasion Of The Bodysnatchers* (1956) is an obvious McCarthyite metaphor.

In Britain, the Boulting Brothers produced *High Treason* (1951), which focused on a group of local subversives – most of them bohemians and implied deviants – attempting to capture Britain's power stations ahead of a communist takeover. But Cold War-themed popular culture was more often geared towards the public appetite for action and glamour: the *James Bond* novels of Ian Fleming and subsequent movies being the most obvious example.

Nor was Cold War culture without scepticism. Throughout the 'Karla trilogy' of novels by John Le Carré (the former MI6 operative John Cornwell), the jaded intelligence operative George Smiley wonders if his opponents' methods are much different to his own.

As early as 1963, Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop produced *Oh! What A Lovely War*, which satirized post-imperial and Cold

War delusions. The following year, Stanley Kubrick's *Dr Strangelove: Or How I Learned To Stop Worrying And Love The Bomb* saw Peter Sellers lampoon various political and military stereotypes of the age. Later on, overtly anti-communist films like *Red Dawn* (1984), *Invasion USA* (1985) and the *Rambo* movies were generally regarded as little more than action vehicles for the likes of Sylvester Stallone and Chuck Norris.

By contrast, nuclear war fiction was consistently apocalyptic. Even in the 1950s few people doubted the appalling consequences of a nuclear exchange.

In William Golding's *Lord Of The Flies* (1954) a nuclear war precedes the plane crash at the novel's opening. When a group of boys, isolated on an island, descend into savagery, the allusion to post-holocaust anarchy is clear.

Again science fiction during the period frequently presented a post-nuclear future in which the scattered remnants of humanity had relapsed into barbarism.

So ingrained was the fear of annihilation that, in November 1965, the BBC announced it would not broadcast *The War Game*, a 47-minute-long docudrama in which a nuclear missile hits Rochester, Kent. In the following weeks, anarchy ensues, looters are summarily executed and mass cremations of the dead take place.

The BBC Director General Hugh Greene claimed the programme was too shocking for public viewing and *The War Game* was not shown until 1985. Similar post-nuclear dramas such as ABC's *The Day After* (1983)

or the BBC's *Threads* (1984) were no less grim. In the 1986 animated feature *When The Wind Blows*, an elderly couple faithfully adhere to the instructions in their 'Protect and Survive' pamphlet only to succumb to radiation sickness soon after the blast.

Nuclear warfare even found its way onto the airwaves. In the 1960s, following the Cuban Missile Crisis, a radio might have resounded with the tones of Bob Dylan's *A Hard Rain's A Gonna Fall* or Barry Maguire's *The Eve Of Destruction*. 20 years later, with US troops in Grenada, Soviet troops in Afghanistan and protestors besieging Greenham Common, nuclear-themed pop hits offered quite a contrast to the usual content of the charts. Among these were *Two Tribes* (Frankie Goes to Hollywood), *Dancing With Tears In My Eyes* (Ultravox), *Russians* (Sting), *Breathing* (Kate Bush) *99 Red Balloons* (Nena) and *1999* (Prince).

Behind the Iron Curtain, similarly apocalyptic themes were less evident, although artists could sometimes comment obliquely on the arms race or Afghanistan, and by the glasnost period of the late 1980s, *The Day After* was finally shown on Soviet television.

It might be argued, however, that Soviet audiences knew much more about 'total' – albeit non-nuclear – warfare than their Western counterparts during this time.

The terrible devastation of the western Soviet Union in 1941-45, like Hiroshima and Nagasaki, seemed like a dark omen of what could happen should the world slide back into all-out warfare. If the world powers ever fought a Third World War, they would not fight a fourth one.



# HOW THE COLD WAR WAS FOUGHT

FORGET OPEN WARFARE AND TRADITIONAL COMBAT, THE COLD WAR WAS UNDERHAND, MANIPULATIVE AND COMPETITIVE – YET JUST AS DANGEROUS AS ANY MAJOR CONFLICT



**W**

hen thinking of a war, most tend to conjure up images of tanks rolling across fields and of gunshots being fired between warring enemies. You can often identify clear sides

and see the movement of troops and the territorial gains that they make. This was very much evident during the World War II when the Allies, including Great Britain, the US and Russia, fought on the same side against the Axis powers.

But what followed was very different indeed. A deep and long-running distrust between the US and Russia ended up sparking a new, modern type of conflict. Only this time it was fought indirectly and on more fronts and with more tactics than just armed combat as the various leaders of the countries involved found many different ways to flex their muscle.

Like two squabbling children arguing over whose things are better, both sides would antagonise each other, albeit through espionage, propaganda, economic aid,

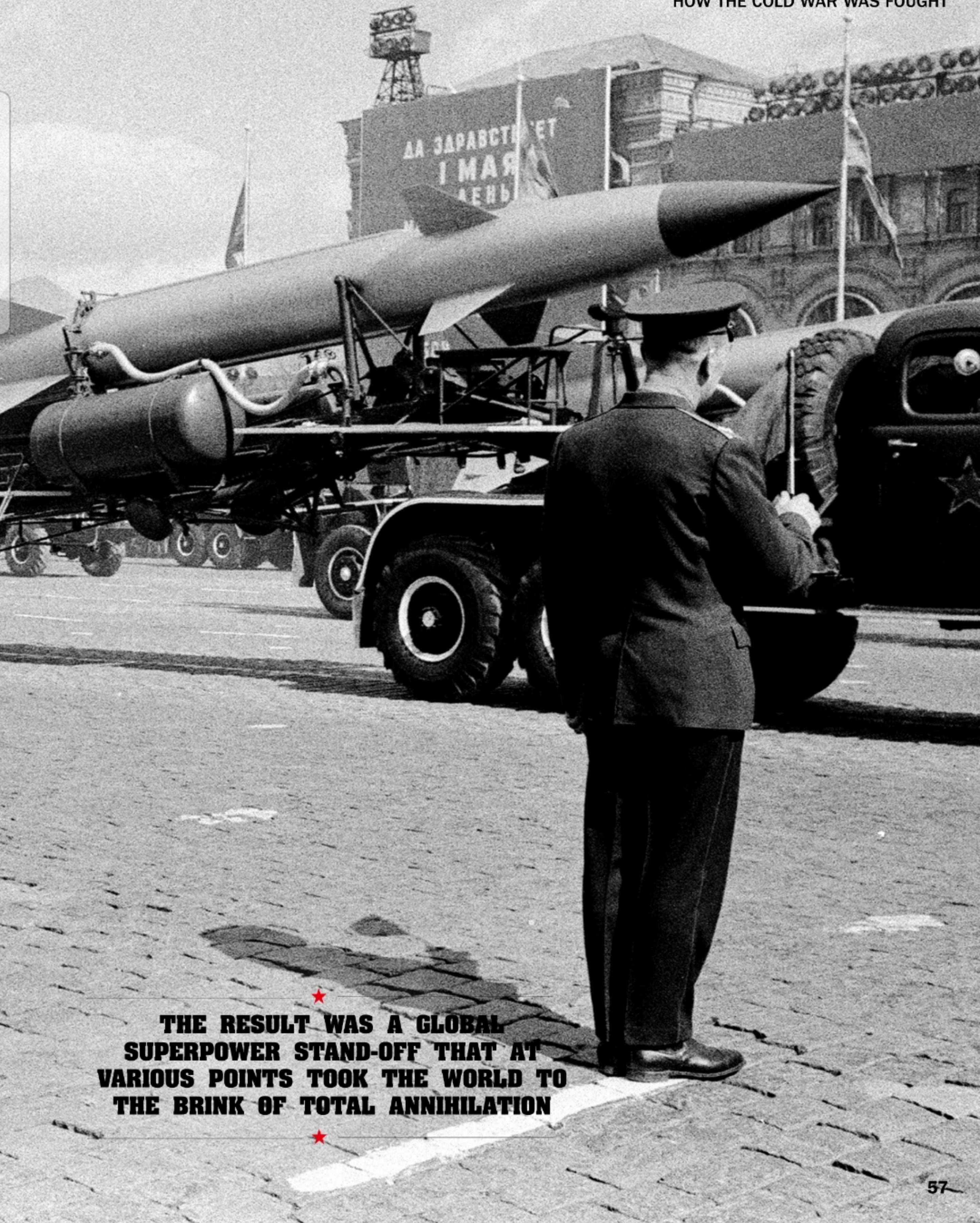
the build-up of arms and the formation of military coalitions. Neither side missed an opportunity to showcase their supposed superiority in every way possible and they were steadfast in their belief that the ideological paths they had chosen were very much the right ones.

The result was a global superpower stand-off that at various points took the world to the brink of total annihilation. That such a thing did not happen was because both sides were primarily focused on defence, strength and threat: defence of their own way of life, strength in the hope that they would win a war should it come to it, and threat to show that any attempts to agitate would be futile and almost certainly backfire.

As such, it was a dangerous yet surprisingly contained rivalry that eventually divided East and West and froze it in such a way for decades. It spread across the world where it became symbolised by the construction of the Berlin Wall – a clear demarcation of them and us for both sides. Here we look at the ways in which the conflict manifested itself.

● The May Day Parade in Moscow's Red Square was just one of many occasions that the Soviet Union used to project its military power





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**THE RESULT WAS A GLOBAL  
SUPERPOWER STAND-OFF THAT AT  
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THE BRINK OF TOTAL ANNIHILATION**  
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## PEDDLING PROPAGANDA TO THE MASSES

Both the US and USSR used a wide variety of propaganda techniques to infiltrate the minds of citizens everywhere to protect their ideologies

Since the battle between the US and USSR was built upon differing ideologies, both sides were keen to present the other in the worst possible light. They pushed their relevant agendas in a wide number of ways and looked to make themselves appear stronger and victorious, using propaganda as the key weapon in their attempts to gain the upper hand.

In all cases, the messages were clear. The Americans claimed the Soviets were ignorant of human rights and were following an evil social system that put citizens at the heel of tyrant communist dictators. The Soviets pushed an omnipresent anti-capitalist ideology that criticised the West as cash-obsessed and inferior, where the workers were enslaved and great injustice was prevalent.

Huge amounts of money were poured into creating and promoting the exaggerated statements that were being pumped out daily. The CIA estimated that the Soviet propaganda budget was as high as \$4 billion in the 1980s but the Americans also spent many millions as they sought to influence the masses with anti-communist sentiment.

It appeared especially important for propaganda to pervade popular culture. Comics were published by the US government to drive its message home: *Korea My Home*, for instance, stressed the reasons why the US troops were needed in the battle against the evil ambitions of the communist Korean People's Army. There was also an attempt to revive Captain America, a superhero so successful in the propaganda battle of World War II.

The Americans used film, music, literature and television too. An early example, *Make Mine Freedom*, was a blatant Cold War-era propaganda animation that laid on the humour to diminish communism and raise the status of capitalism. But then barely a radio or television series could pass by listeners and viewers in the 1950s without the drip-feed of how well the USA and its nuclear families were performing together as a society. Even James Bond was a weapon in this war, Ian Fleming having created the character as a "Commie basher".

Not that higher culture was immune from the propagandists. The CIA was widely yet secretly supportive of American Abstract Expressionist painters, even those who were ex-communists. It was desperate to portray the cultural power of the US and show how creative and intellectually free its citizens were against the straightjacketed Soviets.

This extended to distributing anti-communist literature in businesses, schools and public places, and funding persuasive radio stations such as Voice of America, which was broadcast behind the Iron Curtain from 1947 as a way of countering Soviet propaganda.

It was deemed necessary because the Russians had control of the media including stations such as Radio Moscow, television channels and cinema (upon which the Central United Film Studios and the Committee on Cinema Affairs exerted a tight grip). It was illegal to disagree with USSR doctrine and the US feared mass brainwashing since Soviet propaganda was as much about controlling its citizens and ensuring other communist states remained faithful as it was about beating the Americans.

Those who refused to toe the line were arrested, tortured, imprisoned and executed. Meanwhile, posters would promote a happy way of life using strong Russian iconography and simple, easily digestible messages that didn't even need a command of the language to understand. Loyalty – for both sides – was crucial.



ПОЗОРНОЕ КЛЕЙМО  
АМЕРИКАНСКОЙ "ДЕМОКРАТИИ"

■ A mocking Soviet poster featuring the Statue of Liberty, declaring "the shameful brand of American democracy"



■ Anti-communist sentiments ran through much of the media – even affecting the British icon James Bond, seen here in 'From Russia With Love'



## INFILTRATING ENEMY INSTITUTIONS

Espionage was rife as the communists and capitalists tried to gather as much intelligence on the opposition as they possibly could

Two government organisations stand out most starkly during the Cold War: the American CIA and the Soviet KGB. With their network of spies across the world and a great thirst for gathering intelligence, they each hoped to discover what the other side was up to and get a grip on their military prowess. As such, knowledge was indeed power and there were numerous flashpoints along the way.

The CIA was born on 18 September 1947 following the passing of the National Security Act that year. It succeeded the Office of Strategic Services that had been formed by President Franklin D Roosevelt after Japan's surprise attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941. When World War II ended, Roosevelt's successor, Harry Truman, felt the US needed a co-ordinated intelligence system that could match those of the British Empire and Russia.

But as well as gathering intelligence, the CIA was given the power to perform "other functions and duties related to intelligence affecting the national security." Using a huge cash reserve that it had partly built up by taking a small percentage of money from the Marshall Plan, it paid émigrés to deliver intelligence on Soviet plans and it funded anti-communist labour, student and intellectual organisations, each of which were hidden behind fronts so as not give away the identity of their backer. They were able to feed information back on potential Russian plans.

Yet the Russians were astute and recruiting just as heavily, and it not only led to a proliferation of spies but double agents too. The Soviets were the first to send spies, without agency cover, to operate in the US and on the soil of its NATO allies. One such case involved Gordon

Lonsdale, who masterminded the Portland Spy Ring in the UK in the late 1950s. He was unveiled as the Soviet Intelligence officer Konon Molody while Peter Kroger, of the same ring, was actually Moris Cohen, an American citizen who was carrying out espionage for the Soviets with his wife, Helen Kroger, aka Leontine Cohen.

Arrested along with British-born Harry Houghton – a spy for the People's Republic of Poland and the USSR – and his lover Ethel Gee, they had been gathering intelligence on UK operations and yet they were typical of spies: able to blend into the background and take on assuming jobs. But they were merely among many others handing information to the Soviets.

The Cambridge Five worked their way into the British Establishment and atomic spies were situated in the US, Britain and Canada, illicitly dishing out information about the production of nuclear weapons and designs to the USSR. It worked both ways, though – the CIA recruited thousands of foreign agents sympathetic to the West to send information back and they also broadcast anti-communist sentiments on Radio Free Europe from 1949.

There were some farcical situations, though. The CIA supported a Polish resistance group called the Freedom and Independence movement but had no idea that the Soviets had broken it up in 1947 and yet continued to allow the Americans to think it still existed. The CIA's spies were also convinced North Korea's Kim Il-sung would not attack the south – which he did with Russian and Chinese backing. It also had to admit that it was operating surveillance missions over the USSR in 1960 when a Soviet surface-to-air missile shot down a U-2 spy plane.

■ U-2 reconnaissance planes would fly over Soviet positions in a bid to spy on the US's rivals



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**THE SOVIETS WERE THE FIRST TO SEND SPIES, WITHOUT AGENCY COVER, TO OPERATE IN THE US AND ITS NATO ALLIES**

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## STOCKPILING NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Both sides looked to manufacture and stockpile nuclear weapons, causing the world to hold its breath

The starting pistol for the nuclear arms race was fired by the United States of America during World War II when it carried out its first successful nuclear weapon test in July 1945 and followed it up a month later with the dropping of two atomic bombs on the Japanese cities Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Such was the devastating effect of the weapons that the newly-formed United Nations held discussions about their future use. But six months later, the US investigated the effect of nuclear weapons on warships while the Soviets got on with creating their own atomic bombs, having found a rich source of uranium in Eastern Europe.

The Soviets exploded their first nuclear weapon on 29 August 1949, greatly surprising the US. But it was the development of the hydrogen bomb that saw the race heat up: the US detonated its first in 1952 followed by the Soviets the following year. Further tests were carried out throughout the decade and the US introduced the B-52 bomber.

Both sides looked to amass firepower. The Russians went down the route of quantity while the US sought fewer missiles but of better quality. Intercontinental ballistic missiles were seen as essential in being able to launch long-range strikes, and the launch of the Russian Sputnik satellite raised fears in the US that the Soviets could reach across the world.

The arms race was as much about deterrent though: Mutually Assured Destruction (also known as MAD) ensured there was no doubt that an attack would lead to a wipeout of the world. Even so, Russia stepped up its efforts in the 1960s while the US was scaling back. By then, there had been some heart-in-mouth moments, not least the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962 in which the Soviets had sought to place nuclear ballistic missiles on Cuban soil.

Detente in the 1970s saw agreements to reduce weapons spending, leading to the Partial Test Ban Treaty, but the USA stepped up the race in the 1980s with talk of the so-called Star Wars programme that would create space and Earth-based laser systems. A nervous Russia began to pull back, and by the end of the decade with the fall of the USSR, the race was over.

■ Viktor Lukyanov, chief of the Kapustin Yar Nuclear Museum, shows a soviet ballistic warhead used after 1956





## A WAR FOR HEARTS & MINDS

■ A tank-mounted mine roller prepares to clear a highway in Vietnam during the war



## FIGHTING IN PROXY WARS

The Cold War rivals battled behind the cover of other countries' conflicts

The USSR and the USA did not wage a direct military war against each other during the period of the Cold War since there was a general worry that going head-to-head would lead to a nuclear holocaust. Instead, the Soviets and the Americans armed other countries or insurgent forces, backing the side that best served their interests.

There was a huge number of proxy wars, with the first being the Korean War that began on 25 June 1950. As 75,000 soldiers from the Soviet-backed North crossed into the US-backed South, it sparked a war between communism and capitalism, with the Americans keen to show strength against what it believed to be the greatest threat to the world.

Arguably the best known proxy war, though, was the one fought in Vietnam for 20 bloody years. The North Vietnamese army was supported by the Soviet Union and China and so was firmly communist, with the South Vietnamese army supported by an anti-communist alliance that included the US and the Philippines. During this period, the Americans also had to contend with the guerrilla organisation the Viet Cong.

Afghanistan was another major front in the Cold War. The Mujahideen, backed by the US, fought against the Soviet Army and the allied Afghan forces. Just as with Vietnam, it preoccupied the USSR for a large number of years – ten in this case – but with dozens more proxy wars being fought in the four corners of the Earth, such conflicts were almost a way of life.

## THE FLAWED SOFTWARE SPARKED HUGE, COSTLY EXPLOSIONS THAT ENDED UP DESTABILISING THE RUSSIAN ECONOMY

### APPLYING ECONOMIC PRESSURE

Economic health was highly prized and it was used to control and dominate allies and rivals

Over the course of the Cold War, the US and the USSR were both in a position to furnish their allies with military and economic aid, and this allowed them to exert pressure and influence on what had become two halves of the world. But there were occasions when the sides would exert economic pressure on each other as well: the wars in Vietnam and Afghanistan, for instance, proved costly, and the latter was so financially crippling for the Soviets that it is regarded as one of the main reasons for the eventual collapse of the USSR.

In 1982, however, there was a real – and successful – attempt to damage the Soviet industry by the powers of the West. The CIA had come to possess what was known as the Farewell dossier, which was a list of Soviet agents tasked with stealing and cloning American software in order to build chemical plants, spacecrafts, weapons systems and more. The agency decided it would be a good – if not morally and ethically dubious – idea to feed intelligence officers software that contained deliberate flaws.

It placed a logic bomb within a control system that the Russians used for the Trans-Siberian

Pipeline. Since it was coded to reset the pump speeds and valve settings to produce high pressures, the flawed software sparked huge, costly explosions that ended up destabilising the Russian economy by disrupting the money that it could earn from the gas supply.

It's little wonder, then, that the full details of the operation did not emerge until 2004 – had it been known at the time, this act of economic sabotage could have easily escalated into something very severe indeed.



■ A 50 roubles public bond banknote issued in Russia in 1982 – the year the economy took a nosedive



## DEVELOPING CUTTING-EDGE TECHNOLOGY

Much time, money and effort was put into education to create a workforce capable of creating cutting-edge technology

Aside from the amassing of arms, there were bragging rights associated with the advancement of technology in other areas, including in the kitchen. As well as engaging in a mammoth house-building programme in the 1960s, Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev sought to fill the small homes with time-saving, eye-catching devices.

He had been ruffled by Vice President Richard Nixon in 1959 during the opening of the American National Exhibition at Sokolniki Park in Moscow, where the US exhibitors had created a large house filled with impressive devices that made life easier for residents. The Americans claimed anyone in the US could afford to buy such a home.

So hoping to mimic the style of a 1950s kitchen with their appliances and bold colours, and raise the standard of living of

Soviet citizens – which were rather woeful in comparison – the communists began to convert military factories into toy and domestic appliance manufacturers, creating Western-style radios and modern-looking vacuum cleaners and washing machines.

At the same time, a lot of money was put into education. There was much state-funded research into science and technology, and while this was very much about enhancing the quality of weapons research in the US and the USSR (the US passed the National Defense Education Act in 1958 to provide millions in educational funding), it had an impact on biomedicine, computer science, ecology, meteorology and even agriculture.

Indeed, the Cold War era was a period of technical innovation that was hallmarked to a large extent in the space race, during which

the US and USSR fought hard to develop technology that would allow them to achieve many space firsts, thereby showing off the benefits of their respective ideologies in the advancement of the human race.



■ Richard Nixon and Nikita Khrushchev clash at the American National Exhibition in what has become known as the Kitchen Debate

## ESTABLISHING SPORTING SUPREMACY

The rivals saw sport as another good test of how well their nations were performing

Sport proved to be a way in which countries could show the physical strength and health of their populations, and it figured highly in the point-scoring era of the Cold War. In 1966, there were rumours that top athletes competing in the European Track and Field Championships in Hungary were men disguised as women. In 1972, the Soviet Union ended up facing the United States in the basketball final of the Munich Olympics – and even though the US were

strong favourites to win, they ended up losing by just one point, with a score of 51-50.

That's only half the story, though. The Americans believed they had won 50-49 with three seconds left. But with a second to go, Renato Jones, the co-founder of the international basketball federation FIBA (and who had been visited ten weeks earlier by Soviet chief of the basketball office Nikolai Beshkarev) added another two seconds to the clock. It gave the Soviets two chances to score,

which they took. The Americans refused to accept their silver medals and it caused a furore that continues to rankle to this day.

In 1980, the United States had a chance to take revenge when it met the Soviets in a Winter Olympics hockey game and beat them 4-3 against all the odds and went on to achieve gold. It then compounded the USSR's misery by leading a boycott of the Moscow Summer Olympics and pressured dozens of others to do the same. This was in response to the Soviet's refusal to withdraw troops from Afghanistan. The Soviet Union boycotted the 1984 Olympics in Los Angeles in return.



■ Soviet basketball players beat the US in the Olympic final of 1972 with a score of 51-50



# THE RACE TO OUTER SPACE

WITH THEIR EYES FIRMLY ON SPACE, THE USA AND RUSSIA FOUGHT THE COLD WAR ON ANOTHER FRONTIER AND RACED TO SHOW OFF THEIR TECHNICAL PROWESS

**P**aris felt it first; London was shocked by it later. But the terrifying effects of the Nazis' V-2 bombs as they flew over large populations and exploded were entirely the same. Buildings were destroyed and people were killed as the onslaught began on 7 September 1944. For several weeks, people grew fearful of the lack of defence against this new wave of attack. Little did the Nazis know at the time that their frightening rockets would one day play a major role in the eventual race to space.

The V-2s were the brainchild of SS scientist Wernher Magnus Maximilian von Braun and they had been constructed by prisoners of Nazi Germany's brutal concentration camps. Von Braun was not only later found to be aware of this, evidence suggested that he actively chose slave labour. Yet when the Allies were on their way to victory, von Braun and his staff surrendered to the Americans, who put them on the payroll of the US Army as part of their own core rocket team.

Both the US and the USSR were keen to discover more about Germany's long-range ballistic missiles. The United States of America had taken control of the V-2 factory in the German seaport of Peenemünde in the last weeks of war and it had moved the technology out as quickly as it could, which later frustrated a team of USSR experts that been sent on their own fact-finding mission.

Among the Russians was Sergei Korolev, who had helped develop Soviet rocketry in the previous decade. He had spent some time in prison following the Great Purge of 1938 but the USSR was aware of his worth. He helped to round-up as many former V-2 rocket engineers and scientists as possible and they were eventually taken to Russia to work on recreating the missile's documentation. But

while the USSR was keen to use the technology for military purposes, Korolev's obsession with spaceflight would ensure the plan eventually headed in a different direction.

Von Braun had similar ideas. He and his team were transferred to the Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville by the army in 1950. On 14 May that year, *The Huntsville Times* reported that von Braun had said rocket flights to the Moon were entirely possible. He had long dreamed about developing rockets that would propel artificial satellites and humans into space but internal politics were frustrating his ideas. Worse, unknown to him, Korolev was stealing a march. In 1953, the Soviet had proposed using the R-7 design, which he had grown from V-2 technology, to launch a satellite into orbit around Earth.

While von Braun sought to win over the hearts and minds of the American public – publishing his ideas in *Collier's* magazine and becoming the technical adviser of an episode of the TV show *Disneyland* called 'Man In Space' – Korolev continued to work on his satellite launch. In 1955, American president Dwight D Eisenhower approved plans to launch a satellite during the International Geophysical Year of 1958. But having already fired R-7 Semyorka – the first intercontinental ballistic missile – on 21 August 1957, it was the USSR that made history, using the same technology on 4 October to launch the first artificial satellite into space. Sputnik 1 took the United States by surprise, since the nation had believed Russian technology was lagging behind. Questions began to be asked of US scientists and von Braun reacted with fury, telling his superiors that more commitment was needed. The space race was on.

The Soviets lapped up the fallout although, keen to protect their key asset, they kept Korolev's identity under wraps. The Communist

★  
**THERE WAS ALSO A FEELING THAT CONQUERING SPACE COULD GIVE THE VICTOR CONTROL OF EARTH**  
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■ The Lunar Module Eagle landed on the Moon carrying astronauts Neil Armstrong and Edwin 'Buzz' Aldrin





## A WAR FOR HEARTS & MINDS



■ The Saturn V launch vehicle was crucial in propelling the Apollo spacecraft to the Moon

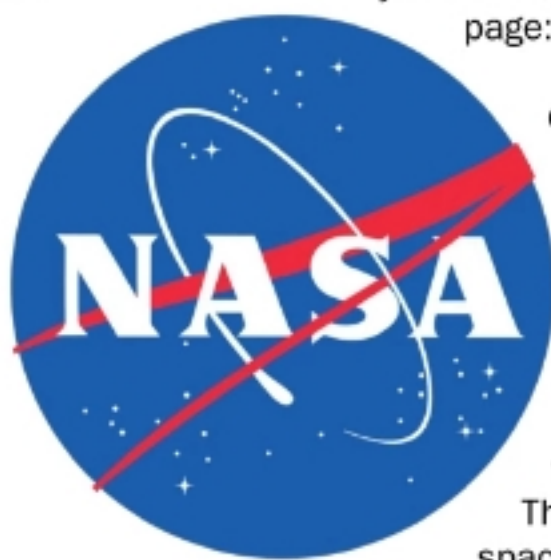


■ Sputnik 1 remains a symbol of national pride for Russians, even today

Party newspaper *Pravda* gleefully gave up its front page to the news while US citizens became anxious at the reality of a military-grade rocket capable of great distances. A month later, the USSR launched its second satellite, Sputnik 2, into orbit on 3 November 1957. Weighing more than 450 kilograms, it carried a live female dog called Laika into orbit and had a packed payload including radio transmitters, a telemetry system, scientific instruments and a temperature control panel.

To make matters worse, the USA's launch attempt of Vanguard TV3 on 6 December 1957 saw the rocket lift just over one metre before falling back down and exploding, leading to humiliating headlines such as "Kaputnik" and "Flopnik". It eventually launched its own satellite, Explorer 1, on 31 January 1958, and while it followed it in March with the first solar-powered satellite, Vanguard 1, the USA was seen to be lagging behind.

In an attempt to catch up, NASA was formed in October of that year, with a remit to expand



human knowledge of phenomena in the atmosphere and space and to preserve the role of the USA as a leader in aeronautical and space science and technology. Significantly, it was set apart from the US military with the message being that scientific exploration of space would be for peaceful applications. And yet the Russians were already on the next page: manned spaceflight.

Korolev and his team had started designing a manned space capsule in 1955 and they began selecting volunteers for vigorous training in 1959. 20 Soviets had come forward and they were being put through their paces. At the same time, NASA had chosen seven astronauts of its own, which it dubbed the Mercury Seven. The Americans put their Mercury spacecraft through intense tests to ensure it was safe enough for human travel. Yet it took slightly too long.

The USSR had whittled its volunteers down to six by June 1960 and eventually chose 27-year-old cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin to be the pilot for its manned mission. On 12 April 1961, he made history on board Vostok 1 becoming the first human in space when he orbited Earth

once during a 108-minute-long flight. It proved to be yet another blow for the USA, who would send their own candidate – Alan B Shepard – into space just three weeks later on 5 May.

The space race became highly pressurised with Korolev and von Braun's teams urged to come up with the next big, jaw-dropping moment. The USSR and the USA were locked in a battle to prove they were technologically more advanced and it was a deep psychological test for both sides. The Russians had already proved they were not the backward people the Americans had made them out to be. There was also a feeling that conquering space could give the victor control of Earth. So it was that US President John F Kennedy lay down a challenge. He said the USA would send a man to the Moon by the end of the decade.

In 1961, NASA launched Project Gemini, which was a series of spacecraft created to test Moon-bound technology. In 1962, a second group of astronauts was selected and a third was picked in 1963. The USA was achieving some great feats and NASA was benefiting from a 500 per cent boost in funds. Walter Schirra orbited Earth six times and Mariner 2 performed a fly-by of Venus, returning data on its atmosphere, magnetic field, charged particle environment and mass. Gemini

### 1944

**Germany launches its V-2 rocket**  
The V-2 long-range guided ballistic missile was developed by Dr Wernher von Braun and his team on behalf of Nazi Germany. A vertical launch crosses the boundary of space.

### 1945

**Rush to discover V-2 tech**  
The Allies capture the V-2 rocket complex although USSR experts including Sergei Korolev attempt to recover the secrets of V-2 technology for themselves. Braun begins working for the USA.

### 1953

**USSR plans to launch satellite**  
By now Korolev is the lead Soviet rocket engineer working on the development of ballistic missiles. The R-7 is the world's first intercontinental ballistic missile and Korolev says it could be used to launch a satellite into space. The seeds of space exploration are cast.

### 1957

**The Space Race begins**  
The USSR launches Sputnik 1. The United States – which had spoken of launching its own satellite only two years earlier – is worried Russia will use the satellites to attack.

### 1957

**Sputnik 2 is launched**  
A month later, the USSR launches its second satellite, this time carrying a dog called Laika – one of the first live animals to be sent into space. It is understood Laika dies within hours of take off.

### 1958

**US satellite Explorer 1 launches**  
The USA launches its first satellite, Explorer 1, which carries a scientific payload and will go on to discover the Van Allen radiation belt. Explorer 2 later launches on 5 March, but does not reach orbit.

### 1958

**NASA is formed**  
The first solar-powered satellite, Vanguard 1, is launched by the US in March, followed two months later by the USSR's Sputnik 3. In order to better advance the United States' efforts, President Eisenhower establishes the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

### 1961

**First man in space**  
Russian cosmonaut Yuri Gagarin becomes the first human to go into outer space, completing a single orbit of Earth. Alan B Shepard will become the first American in space on 5 May.





■ Sergei Korolev spearheaded the USSR's space programme as the lead rocket engineer and spacecraft designer

examined the long-term effects of space travel on astronauts between 1964 and 1966 and it allowed for ten manned missions.

Yet Korolev was working on the USSR's manned spacecraft Soyuz, and in 1965, Russian cosmonaut Alexei Leonov spent 12 minutes on the first spacewalk. Here, the Soviets had indulged in a spot of mischief: it knew NASA was planning a spacewalk with astronaut Ed White (which took place three months later) so Korolev's team added an airlock to the second Voskhod launch. He had then turned his attention to developing the potentially powerful N1 rocket.

The race to the Moon was well and truly on. Although the Soviets were uncertain a lunar-landing programme was necessary, it nevertheless sought to beat the Americans and claim another victory. But it suffered a major blow. Korolev, who was excited by the prospect of putting a man on the moon, had suffered six years of ill health. He died of complications during routine colon surgery on 14 January 1966. *Pravda* printed his obituary, finally letting the Soviet public and the world know who was behind the USSR's space programme.

Korolev's death meant that he never saw the fruits of his team's labour on the N1 rocket although perhaps that is just as well given that

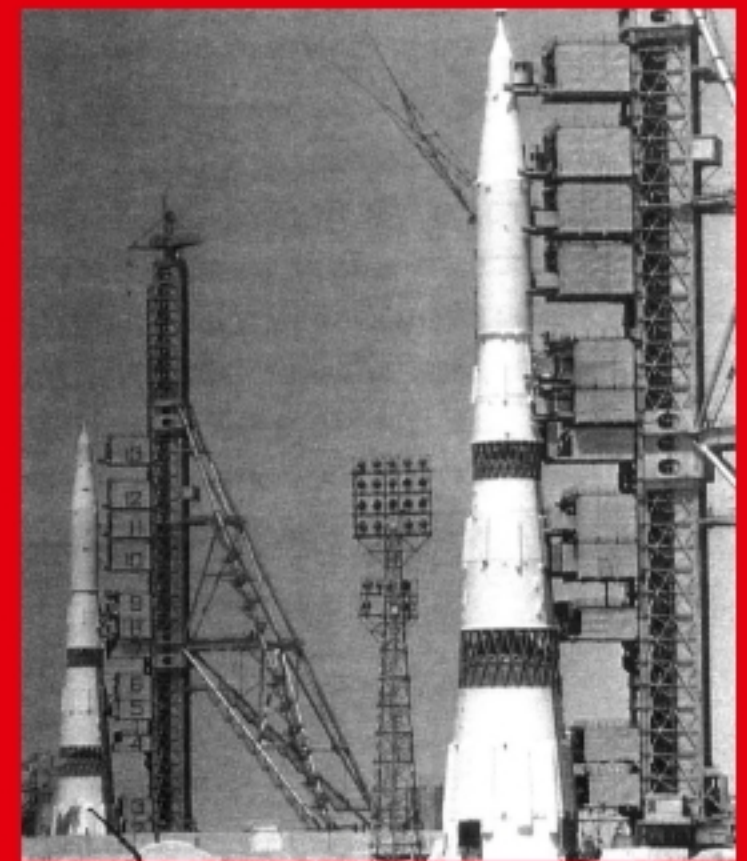
none of the four launches got off the ground. The Soviet space programme had also become a mess with internal designers competing rather than working together. Korolev had been given overall control in 1964 but, now that he was gone, disarray ruled once more. In April 1967, cosmonaut Vladimir Komarov died during re-entry on Soyuz 1.

Not that NASA didn't have setbacks too – a fire in the Apollo 1 capsule during a launch pad test killed US astronauts Gus Grissom, Ed White and Roger Chaffee – but it was far better organised. On 20 July 1969, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin became the first men to walk on the Moon. The USA had achieved the long-awaited and promised dream.

It firmly put the USA in pole position but it also heralded a new direction. Interest in manned lunar missions faded and instead the USSR looked to launch the first human-crewed space station, Salyut 1, while the US looked at missions to Mars. The Moon mission was the beginning of the end of space-related hostilities, though. In 1975, the joint Apollo-Soyuz mission saw three US astronauts launched aboard an Apollo spacecraft that docked with a USSR Soyuz vehicle. When the two commanders met, they greeted each other. The space race was over.

## THE FAILED SOVIET MISSION TO THE MOON

When JFK told the USA in 1961, "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the Earth," it opened a new front in the fledgling space race. But Moscow had been secretly working on its enormous two-man N1 rocket since 1959. Powered by 30 engines, it was thought to be an equal to the USA's Saturn V booster. The first failed launch of this great hulk was attempted on 21 February 1969. The second, on 3 July 1969, was catastrophic. At 11.18pm Moscow time, the rocket lifted but a loose bolt was sucked into a fuel pump, causing the rocket to stall. As it leaned and fell back to Earth, the on-board propellant ignited and the rocket exploded with the force of a small nuclear bomb. US spy satellites picked up on the devastation, which affected buildings as far as 40 kilometres away, destroyed the launch pad and killed dozens. It took the Soviets about 18 months to rebuild the launch pad but two further explosions saw them scrap their plans to send a cosmonaut to the Moon. Such was the secrecy in the USSR that official confirmation of the second launch disaster only emerged in 1989.



### 1961

**NASA announces the Gemini programme**  
Project Gemini will run for five years, developing space travel techniques to land astronauts on the Moon. It looks at orbital docking, re-entry methods and the feasibility and safety of long-duration missions.

### 1963

**First woman in space**  
Soviet cosmonaut Valentina Tereshkova is chosen from 400 applicants to become the first woman to fly in space. The photos she takes will be used to identify aerosol layers within the atmosphere.

### 1964

**First close-up Moon images**  
Gordon Cooper spends 34 hours in space from 15 May while Ranger 7 becomes the first US spacecraft to transmit close-up images of the lunar surface to Earth before it hits the Moon.

### 1965

**The first spacewalk**  
Russia's Alexei Leonov embarks on a 12-minute spacewalk during the Voskhod 2 mission, which nearly ends in disaster as he struggles to re-enter the craft. Ed White would perform the USA's first spacewalk on 3 June.

### 1966

**Luna 9 lands on Moon**  
Russia's Luna 2 had impacted the Moon on 13 September 1959, which was a first, but Luna 9 soft-lands. On 3 April, Luna 10 becomes the first satellite to orbit the Moon.

### 1969

**First man on the Moon**  
The USA manages this gigantic leap when Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin set foot on Earth's natural satellite. With a TV audience of half-a-billion viewers, they plant the American flag into the dusty lunar landscape, hailing a major victory in the Space Race.

### 1971

**First human-crewed space station**  
The USSR launches Salyut 1 as attention shifts to orbiting space stations. But relations between the two nations will eventually thaw: a joint Soviet-US crew will dock an Apollo Command/Service Module with Soyuz 19 in July 1975.



# THE U-2 INCIDENT

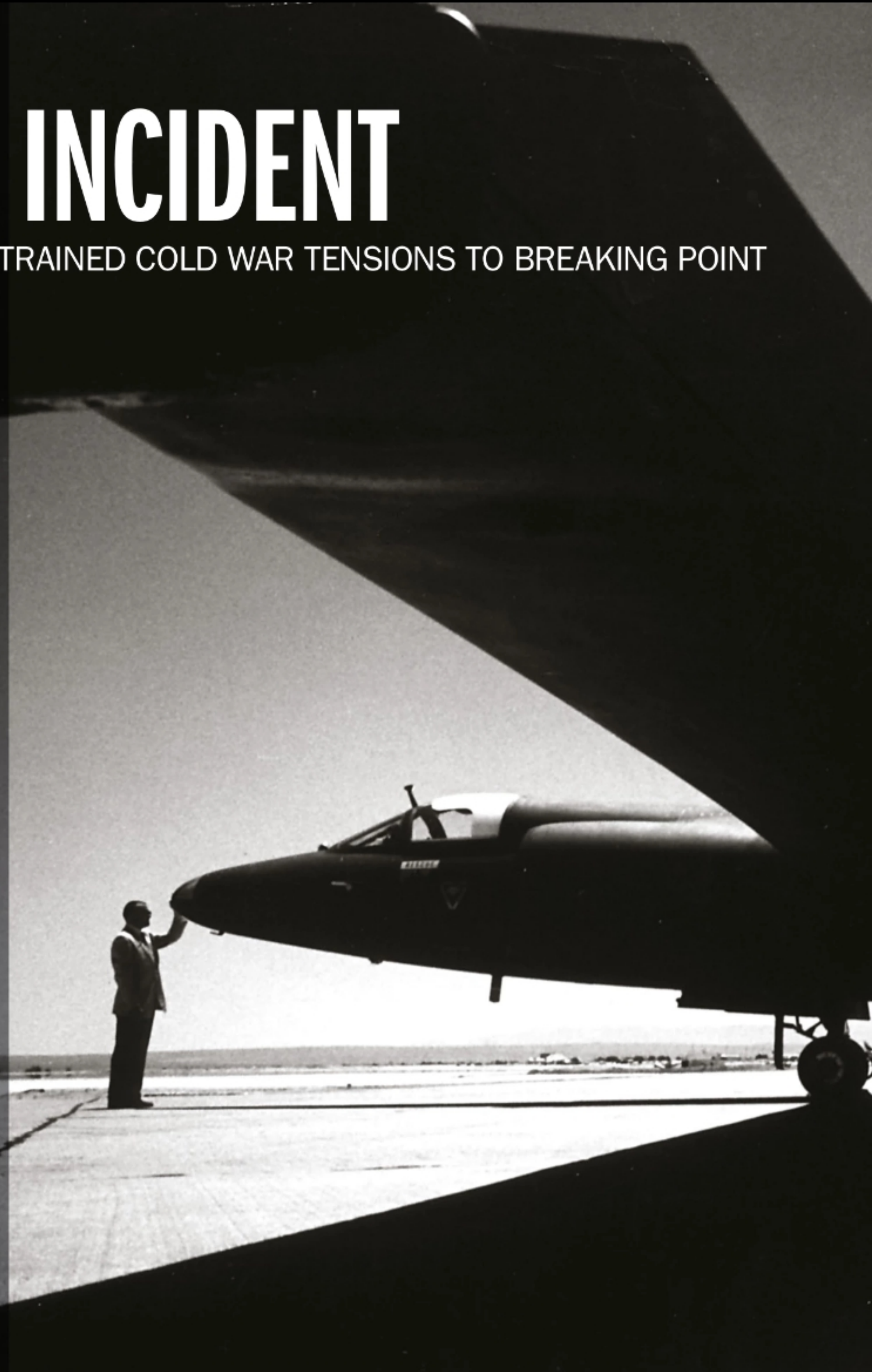
THE EPISODE THAT STRAINED COLD WAR TENSIONS TO BREAKING POINT

## WHAT WAS IT?

On 1 May 1960, Soviet air defences spotted an unidentified aircraft in their airspace at extreme altitude – 70,000 feet up. The intruder was shot down near the Ural Mountains. NASA claimed it was a weather research plane, suggesting that a problem with the oxygen equipment rendered the pilot unconscious over Turkey with the autopilot engaged, but the aircraft was actually an American U-2 spy plane tasked with taking reconnaissance photographs of military targets. However, the USA was unaware that the pilot, Gary Powers, had been captured and that the plane was largely intact. When the Soviets announced they had interrogated Powers and released photographs of the plane, the cover story was blown. On 11 May, President Eisenhower admitted that there was a programme of spy flights over the USSR carried out under orders from the White House.

## WHAT WERE THE CONSEQUENCES?

The diplomatic fallout from the U-2 Incident soured relations between the USA and USSR, bringing to an end a period of peaceful coexistence and ending any hopes that the Cold War might be brought to a close through dialogue. The crisis erupted just before a summit in Paris during which both sides were due to discuss disarmament, but Eisenhower refused to apologise, insisting that the flights were necessary and pushing for an "open skies" agreement. In response, Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev walked out of the summit after only one day and withdrew an invitation to Eisenhower to visit the USSR. Tensions increased, with both sides acting more aggressively. Over the next two years, the USSR authorised the building of the Berlin Wall and the placement of missiles on Cuba, while the USA attempted a failed invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs. The Cold War had become a lot more dangerous.



### 1 MAY 1960

An American U-2 spy plane being flown by CIA pilot Captain Francis Gary Powers is shot down by a Soviet surface-to-air missile. It crashes near the Ural Mountains.



### 5 MAY

A statement released by NASA indicates that a weather research plane has gone missing; the USSR admits shooting down a plane over its territory.



### 7 MAY 1960

After the US authorities continue the cover story, Khrushchev reveals that the pilot has been captured and the wreckage recovered by the USSR.



## WHO WAS INVOLVED?

**GARY POWERS****1929-77**

Recruited by the CIA, the U-2 pilot was released by the Soviets after two years in a prisoner exchange.

**DWIGHT EISENHOWER****1890-1969**

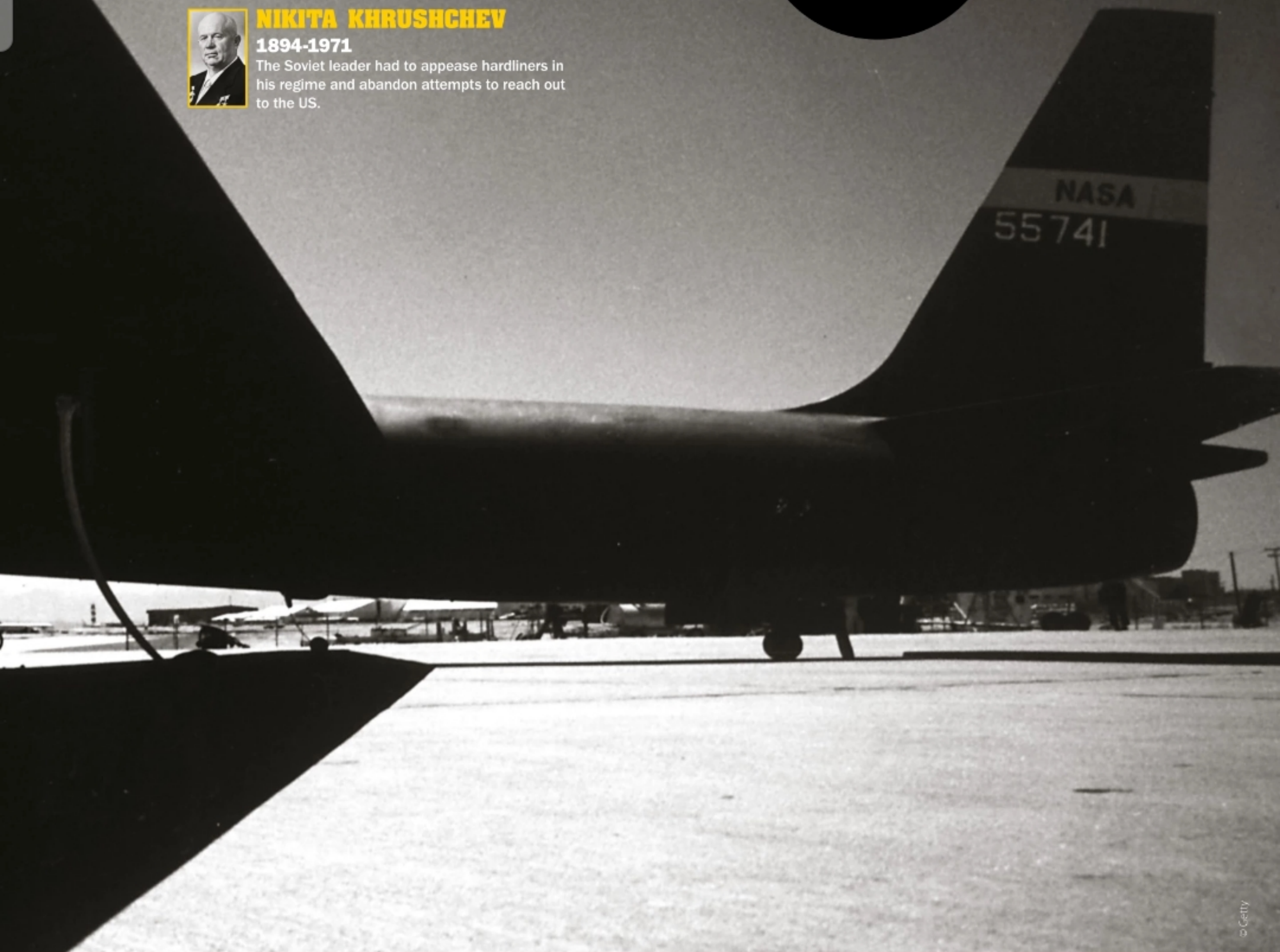
The US president personally approved U-2 spy flights over the USSR and was party to the cover story.

**NIKITA KHRUSHCHEV****1894-1971**

The Soviet leader had to appease hardliners in his regime and abandon attempts to reach out to the US.

**DID YOU KNOW**

One missile launched at the U-2 accidentally shot down a Soviet fighter that had not had its transponder updated with new codes.

**11 MAY 1960**

American President Eisenhower admits that spy planes have flown over the USSR but refuses to issue an apology, insisting that they are defensive flights.

**16 MAY 1960**

Khrushchev walks out of the Paris summit after just one day, blaming US provocation and ending any hopes of reconciliation between the nations.

**10 FEBRUARY 1962**

Captain Powers is released in Berlin in a prisoner exchange. A captured Soviet spy, Rudolf Abel, is released in return by the USA.



# KEY PLAYER: DWIGHT D EISENHOWER

THE 34TH PRESIDENT OVERSAW A PERIOD OF GREAT GROWTH FOR THE UNITED STATES WHILE TRYING TO STEER THE COUNTRY AWAY FROM ANOTHER WORLD CONFLICT

**A** famed general and post-war leader, Dwight, or 'Ike', D Eisenhower is considered to be one of the greatest presidents in the history of the United States. In his time in the army he oversaw some of the most pivotal operations of WWII, such as the allied landings in northern France of Operation Overlord. The West Point graduate would work hard throughout his life to reach that point. Moving from Texas to Kansas when he was young, Dwight enjoyed an active childhood where he took great pleasure in sports such as baseball and American Football. Upon gaining entry into West Point in 1911 Eisenhower was set on the path that would lead to greatness. Enjoying the military tradition and active lifestyle he would graduate a 2nd lieutenant in 1915 and would spend WWI training tank crews, earning a reputation for his excellent organisational skills. Still bitter that he did not get to see combat, Eisenhower continued to climb steadily through the ranks in the interwar period, even when tragedy struck in 1921 and his son, Doud Dwight, died of scarlet fever. Serving under another great WWII general, Douglas MacArthur, Eisenhower would be a brigadier general when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor struck.

The war would be the proving ground of Eisenhower. He demonstrated great ability in planning Operation Torch, the allied invasion of North Africa, and commanding allied forces in Operation Overlord, including the D-Day landings that allowed the allies to gain a beachhead in northern France. Recognised as a great military mind Eisenhower was made the

military governor of the US occupied zone in Germany after the war. Here he would help to rebuild Germany, which was still reeling from the terrible destruction.

A pivotal moment for Eisenhower came when, in the years just after WWII, he realised that there could be no long term cooperation between the US and the Soviet Union. Plans for peaceful cohabitation gave way to a containment policy to check Soviet expansion.

While coming to this realisation Eisenhower would be encouraged by President Truman and others to run in the 1948 elections. Although he declined and stated that as a lifelong professional soldier he should abstain from gaining high political office, this would be the first step towards becoming the country's 34th president. Accepting the presidency of Columbia University and later the post of supreme allied commander of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Eisenhower was able to make his voice and opinions heard about the difficulties and supremacy of US democracy, and where it stood on the world stage. He was again pressured to run in the presidential election by president Truman and finally relented. In 1952 he won the election by a landslide with the simple but effective slogan, 'I like Ike'. During his presidency he would continue the domestic policy of Roosevelt's New Deal, while his foreign policy would aim to reduce Cold War tensions with Russia through military negotiation.

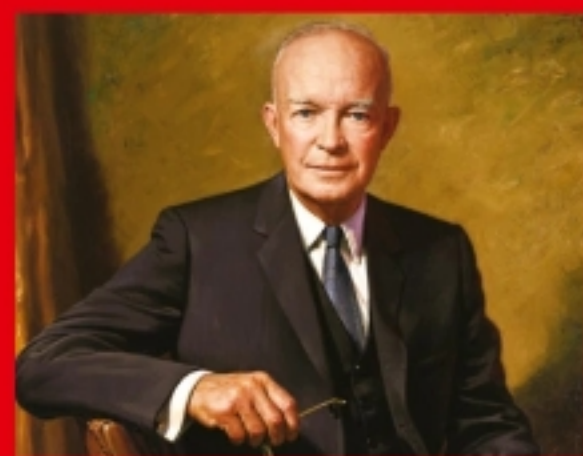
This was met with mixed success, as although he was able to reach breakthroughs like the orchestration of a ceasefire on the Korean border, incidents like those involving

the U2 spy plane would prove extremely embarrassing. In 1960 an American U2 spy plane operated by the CIA was shot down over Russia during an intelligence gathering mission. The Russians broadcast to the world what they had done, pointing the finger straight at America. Uncomfortable with admitting the truth America claimed the craft was intended for weather research and that it had accidentally flown over Soviet airspace. This as all before Russia announced that they had the pilot, alive and well, from the crashed plane in custody. No longer being able to deny the accusations the Americans were embarrassed on the world stage, a tough blow for any president's leadership.

Not all of Ike's presidential landmarks were purely military-based, however. His 'Atoms for Peace' speech at the UN in 1953 had far-reaching consequences for both civil and military life. Delivered to the UN general assembly this speech was a landmark in politics as it brought atomic development from secretive government research labs into the public eye. This new language of atomic warfare, with its terrible destructive power, placed grave responsibility on the countries involved in the development of these weapons. Eisenhower had been against the use of the atomic bomb on Japan in 1945, but this did not stop his administration raising the number of nuclear warheads the US possessed from 1000 to 20,000 during his time at the White House. Some good did come out of the speech though: allied countries that did not previously have access to nuclear power now had the expertise of American scientists, and this powerful new branch of science was better understood all over the world.

Upon reaching the end of his second term, Eisenhower retreated from political life and with his wife, known as Mamie, would retire to a farm in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. Admitted to hospital on 28 March 1969 Eisenhower passed away from congestive heart failure. Speaking of Eisenhower, then-president Richard Nixon said, "Some men are considered great because they lead great armies or they lead powerful nations. For eight years now, Dwight Eisenhower has neither commanded an army nor led a nation; and yet he remained through his final days the world's most admired and respected man, truly the first citizen of the world."

## THE SPACE RACE BEGINS



Eisenhower and the CIA had known that the USSR had the capability to launch an object into space nine months before Sputnik was to break the atmosphere. Not only did this bring the USSR great prestige it also made it clear that space was fair game to any nation that wished to claim it. With his administration's blessing, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) was founded and funding for other scientific programs was granted. Eisenhower was sceptical of the space program however, and was quoted as saying: "Anyone who would spend \$40 billion in a race to the moon for national prestige is nuts."



## LIFE IN THE TIME OF DWIGHT D EISENHOWER

### TWO MORE STATES

In 1959 the US would bring Alaska and Hawaii into the fold by making them the 49th and 50th states respectively to join the United States. Alaska was welcomed for the oil revenue that it would bring to the country and Hawaii was instituted by popular demand. These would be the last US territories to be made into states.

### REACH FOR THE STARS

In 1957 you could be forgiven for thinking that you were living in a science fiction story. The Russians had just fired the first artificial satellite ever into earth's orbit with Sputnik. This space age technology would begin the space race that would end with the United States landing men on the moon for the first time in history.

### FOOT STOMPIN' MUSIC

With artists like Elvis Presley, Chuck Berry and Little Richard blazing the trail, a brand new sound would take 1950s America by storm. Heavily influenced by the blues, jazz and gospel music, rock and roll would come to be associated with teenage rebellion and helped influence the music we hear today.

### BIRTH OF BARBIE

In 1959 toy manufacturer Mattel would launch one of the world's most iconic brands, the Barbie doll. Quickly becoming a fashion icon, Barbie would captivate America's young children for more than 50 years. Despite being at the heart of many controversies it has remained a US household name.

### WATCHING THE STORIES

We can't imagine a world where TV sitcoms don't exist but in the 1950s they were a revelation. Shows like Father Knows Best, The Adventures of Ozzie and Harriet, and I Love Lucy captivated audiences across the country. Running from 1951-57, I Love Lucy was one of the most watched shows in the United States.



■ As a young man, Eisenhower made a deal with his brother Edgar to work two jobs, so as to pay him through college. Edgar would then return the favour



# CRISES & CONFLICTS

- 72** Vietnam
- 82** Key player: John F Kennedy
- 86** 13 days of Armageddon
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# VIETNAM

THE MACHINES, WEAPONS, BATTLES AND  
HEROES OF THIS MOST ICONIC CONFLICT



he Second Indochina War, better known in the West as The Vietnam War, affected the lives of millions, and whole generations on both sides of the conflict were changed forever by the horrors experienced. The jungles, skies and rivers of Vietnam became just the latest battleground in the seemingly unending fight against the perceived global threat of communism.

With the military might of one of the world's superpowers clashing with highly effective guerilla tactics, the war featured some of the deadliest weapons, the most effective hardware and it saw some of the most unbelievable feats of human bravery. Decades after US ground operations began, we take a look at some of the most important machines, battles and heroes of this devastating war.



## VEHICLES

## BELL UH-1 IROQUOIS

Nicknamed the 'Huey', Bell's first turbine-powered helicopter became an enduring Vietnam War symbol

## THE NICKNAME

Bell's original model designation was 'HU-1'. Even when renamed to UH-1, the 'Huey' nickname stuck.

## SERVICE IN VIETNAM

More than 16,000 Bell UH-1s were produced between 1955 and 1976, with over 7,000 of them seeing service.

## LYCOMING TURBOSHAFT ENGINE

Most Hueys featured a 44-foot twin blade rotor.

## NO PARATROOPERS

In Vietnam, the helicopter reigned supreme. Only one parachute drop was conducted during the entire war. The rest of the time, troops were predominantly ferried into enemy territory via helicopter. Nicknamed 'slicks' thanks to their lack of external armaments, the formations were so tight that the rotor blades of neighbouring helicopters often overlapped.

## SERVICE IN VIETNAM

More than 16,000 Bell UH-1s were produced between 1955 and 1976, with over 7,000 of them seeing service.

## VIETNAM'S LONDON BUS

Early UH-1s featured a short fuselage with cabin space for just six troops. Later UH-1B models stretched the fuselage and could seat 15 (or house six stretchers).

## MEDIC!

Initially, assault helicopters were used for medical evacuations. As the war continued, some Huey crews were trained in basic medical skills, and could be summoned with the 'Dustoff' radio call sign.

## SEMI-MONOCOQUE CONSTRUCTION

## THE FIRST GUNSHIPS

Without weapons, 'slick' Hueys were vulnerable. Some were fitted in the field with .30 cal machine guns or rocket pods to provide defensive fire. By 1963, the first factory-built UH-1 gunship, the UH-1C, arrived in Vietnam. Despite this, around 2,500 were lost during the conflict.

## HEROES &amp; VILLAINS

## BRUCE CRANDALL

DOB: 17 FEBRUARY 1933  
COLONEL US ARMY

Flew over 900 combat missions during the war

Bruce Crandall commanded the 1st Cavalry Division's Company A, 229th Assault Helicopter Battalion, and was involved in some of the most heroic acts of the war. Trained to fly both fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters, he was never far from the action. During the Battle of Ia Drang, he evacuated around 70 US soldiers, and supplied

the remaining troops with ammo. Another major mission was Operation Masher, during which he braved intense enemy fire while rescuing 12 wounded soldiers. He earned many awards, like the Aviation & Space Writers Helicopter Heroism Award, the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry and the Medal of Honor for Valor.

Bruce Crandall photographed here flying his Huey within the Ia Drang valley, after dropping off infantry on the ground



## WEAPONS

## 60MM M2 LIGHT MORTAR

Raining down fire from above

Developed during World War II, the M2 steadily replaced the less efficient M19 as the standard mortar for the US Army. Copied from the designs of French engineer Edgar William Brandt, the weapon had a range of nearly 6,000 feet, and was capable of firing high-explosive white phosphorous and illuminating projectile rounds.





EVENTS

## US MARINES LAND 08.03.65

Supplying the South Vietnamese with arms and resources wasn't enough

The first combat troops to be dropped in Vietnam were the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade, who were charged with defending the Danang airfield on 8 March 1965. The first major skirmish began on the 14 November in the Ia Drang Valley as the US forces engaged

the NVA for the first time on the ground. Hundreds of GIs were lost and many more NVA. After the battle had ceased, US troop numbers reached their highest levels yet (200,000) as B-52s flew overhead. The American ground involvement had begun.

BATTLES & OPERATIONS

## IA DRANG

Confirmation that the war would not be over quickly for the United States

Vietnam saw some of the fiercest pitched battles in history. One of these was Ia Drang, the first real clash between the North Vietnamese and US armies. The NVA veered off the Ho Chi Minh trail in an attempt to escalate

the main conflict, and the two sides engaged on the wooded slopes of Chu Pong Mountain on 14 November 1965. The NVA attack was repelled, with over 200 US soldiers killed, while North Vietnamese casualties numbered up to 1,000.

WEAPONS



## 9K32 STRELA-2

Potent anti-air weapon for over-the-shoulder use

With the threat of US air superiority, NVA troops relied heavily on these Soviet-gifted surface-to-air launchers. Also known as the Grail, the weapon's portability was its greatest advantage, as a user could appear and threaten low-flying aircraft seemingly out of nowhere.

### OFF THE TRAIL

Viet Cong and NVA forces advanced southwards and off the Ho Chi Minh path to make their presence felt to the arriving US forces.

### LANDING ZONES

The 1st Cavalry Division touched down. As the North Vietnamese forces marched in, US soldiers engaged and pursued them.

### ENCIRCLEMENT

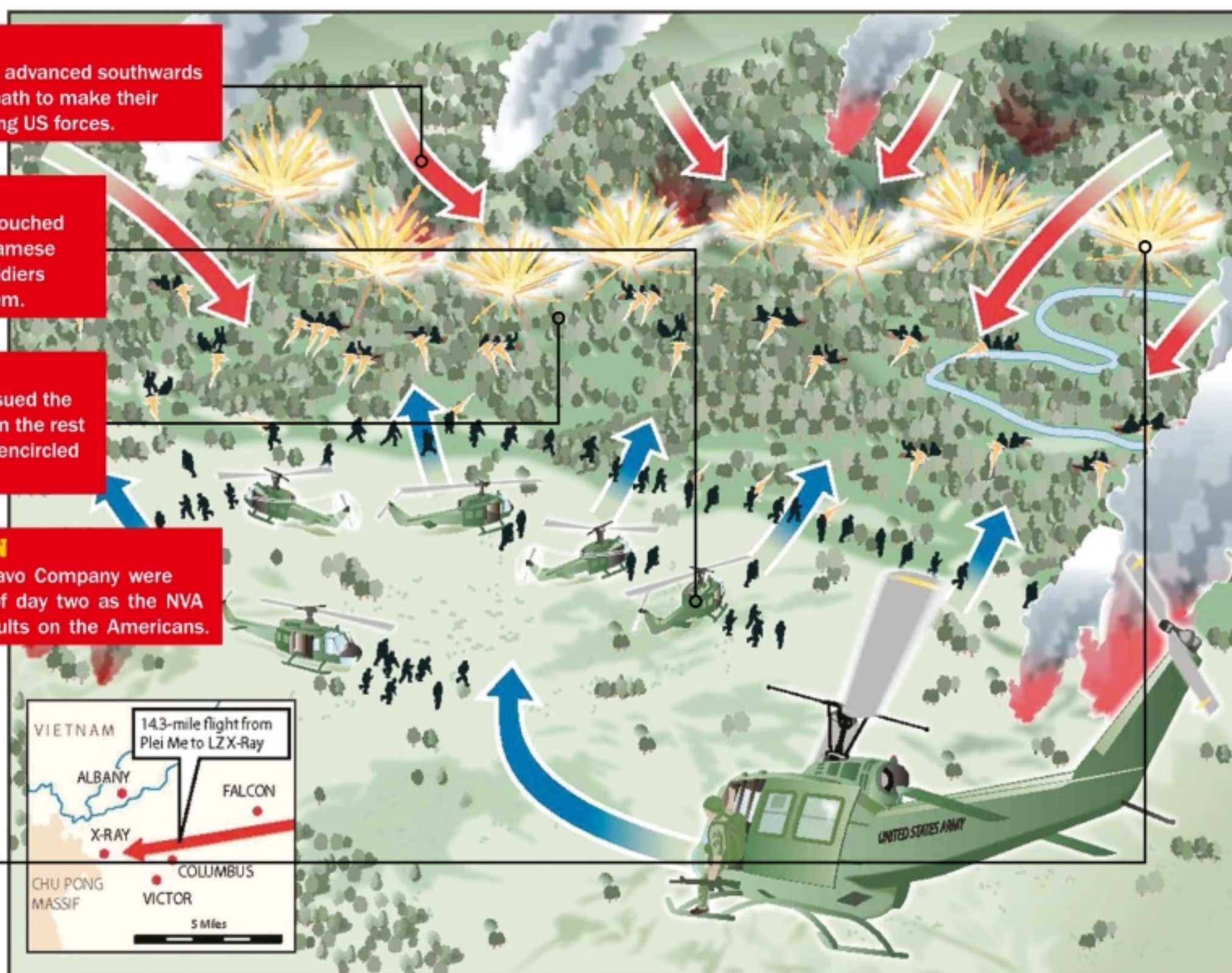
A second US Platoon pursued the NVA, but were cut off from the rest of the ground forces and encircled by the North Vietnamese.

### RESCUE OPERATION

Reinforcements from Bravo Company were sent in on the evening of day two as the NVA launched overnight assaults on the Americans.

### FIRE FROM ABOVE

Napalm strikes pushed the NVA and Viet Cong back after five days of fighting. The NVA was buoyed by its successes against the US.



WEAPONS

## 105MM M101A1 HOWITZER

Fire support dropped into place by helicopter

The 2.2 ton, 105mm M101 Howitzer first entered service in 1941 as the M2A2, seeing action throughout WWII and Korea before it became a mainstay of US firebases in Vietnam.



WEAPONS

## FLAMETHROWERS

The go-to weapon for burning out bunkers and bush

Used for everything from burning brush around firebases and landing zones, to destroying Vietnamese bunkers, flamethrowers were most commonly found mounted on special tanks and riverboats nicknamed 'Zippos'. Man-portable flamethrowers were rarely used, because the heavy tanks held only enough fuel for just nine seconds of burn time.





# US ARMY GI

8.7 million general infantrymen served from 1964-75, most of whom were army volunteers.

## MI HELMET

This headgear was the standard issue in the US Army since WWII.

## WEAPONS

### M16

America's new futuristic 'plastic rifle' was not without problems

In 1966, the US Army replaced the heavy M14 with a space-age lightweight rifle. Troops mocked its plastic stock and unorthodox shape, calling it the 'Mattel toy rifle'. Soon after reaching Vietnam, the M16 began suffering catastrophic jams caused by ammunition problems, made worse by troops being told that the rifle was self-cleaning. GI confidence in the rifle was destroyed by horrifying reports of men killed while disassembling their weapons to clear jams. Despite this, its light weight and high rate of fire made the M16 ideal for jungle fighting. Proper cleaning and some design changes eventually transformed the M16 into a soldier's best friend.

## BODY ARMOUR

These sturdy zip-up flak vests commonly came with ammunition pouches and grenade hangers.

## UTILITY TROUSERS

Olive-green lower garments came with two patch and two hip pockets and were made to endure all weathers and heavy wear.

## JUNGLE BOOTS

Before the introduction of sturdier jungle boots, flimsier footwear rotted quickly in the unforgiving conditions.

## WEAPONS

### AK47 RIFLE

The insurgent's iconic weapon of choice

Designed by Mikhail Kalashnikov in the late Forties, the AK47 reached Vietnam in 1967, with Russia and China sending hundreds of thousands of rifles. The most common was China's copy of the AK, the Type 56. While the gun was less accurate and heavier than the M16, its simple, rugged design meant it was easy to shoot and maintain even after being dragged through the jungle or a muddy rice paddy. Unlike the M16, the AK's heavier 7.62x39mm bullet was able to penetrate dense jungle and even trees. The Vietnam War helped make the AK47 the world's most recognisable rifle.

## SMOKE GRENADE

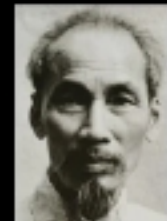
Coloured smoke grenades were frequently used to mark landing zones and casualty pickup points.

## COMMANDERS AND LEADERS



**LE TRONG TAN**  
Chief of Staff and Deputy Minister of Defence of Vietnam

A major commander of the NVA and Communist forces, General Le Trong Tan led assaults on the cities of Hue and Da Nang in 1975. He was also the deputy commander in the Ho Chi Minh campaign in the latter stages of the Spring Offensive.



**HO CHI MINH**  
President of North Vietnam

A veteran of the Indochina War, Ho was in poor health for most of the Vietnam War, and was more of a public figure than a governing one. He was instrumental in planning the Tet Offensive, and remained influential until his death in 1969.



**EARLE WHEELER**  
US Army General & Chairman of Joint Chiefs of Staff

A surprising choice for a general, Wheeler was known for pumping extra troops into combat whenever requested. He favoured heavy-handed tactics, and presided over the heaviest stages of US involvement in the war. He also pioneered the first acts of 'Vietnamisation'.



**RICHARD NIXON**  
US President

Coming into power at a time of huge anti-war sentiment, Nixon planned to withdraw US forces in Vietnam as rapidly as possible. This was easier said than done, and the US remained in 'Nam as they tried to incorporate the 'Vietnamisation' policy.



EVENTS

# MY LAI MASSACRE 16.03.68

The brutal murdering of 500 civilians in the village of My Lai

The guerrilla warfare in Vietnam was so secretive that almost anyone could be in alliance with the Viet Cong. By 16 March 1968, the morale of the US forces was at a low ebb. Task Force Barker was assigned to seek out Viet Cong members in the small village of My Lai, and despite reports stating that very few were of fighting age, the troops opened fire on the residents of the village. The event was a turning point in opinion back in the US, and Lieutenant William Calley was charged for war crimes for his part in the massacre.



VEHICLES

# M520 GOER

An amphibious 4x4 that could go anywhere, helping to supply US troops in South Vietnam

The Caterpillar-built prototype M520 GOERs were pressed into active service in 1966, where they quickly became the most popular resupplying vehicle. The M520 had no suspension, instead relying on tyres for springing.

What's more, the seams between the GOER's external steel frame and sides were watertight, making it amphibious. Despite its success, it wasn't until 1972 that a production order was placed, seeing 812 sent to Vietnam.



BATTLES & OPERATIONS

# SIEGE OF HUÉ

The ancient capital city had been spared damage until January 1968

Despite the war raging relentlessly around it, the ancient city of Hué had barely been touched until January 1968, when 10,000 NVA and Viet Cong troops rolled into town.

2,500 US soldiers crossed the river from the south to help stop the communist advance, before the NVA

could round up and kill leading South Vietnamese government officials and destroy the citadel.

The battle would become one of the largest US urban conflicts of all time. A tactical victory for the US, the gory images seen around the world greatly reduced Western support for the war.

## NVA AND VIET CONG ASSAULT

On the final day of January, North Vietnamese forces sweep through Hué, targeting the citadel as the city falls under NVA control.

## FAILED LIBERATION

The North Vietnamese propaganda fails to register with the majority of Hué's residents, who are against the communist advance, and instead aid the South Vietnamese.

## SECURING THE CITY

The Communists are finally defeated on 2 January, by which point 50 per cent of the ancient city has been destroyed. This is a blow for South Vietnamese morale.

## RUNNING BATTLE

Although outnumbered, the US and South Vietnamese regiments slowly but surely make their way through the city, defeating the NVA regiments in fierce street-to-street combat.

## US RESPONSE

It isn't long until the allies counter-attack as US marines enter the fray and begin advancing through the city from the south. The NVA begins to execute government officials.



# HUGH THOMPSON JR

HEROES & VILLAINS

This true hero stood against the tide during one of the darkest events in the war

DOB: 15 APRIL 1943 ✪ MAJOR ✪ US ARMY



The My Lai Massacre of 16 March 1968 was one of the war's darkest moments, but if it wasn't for Hugh Thompson and his helicopter crew, it would have been a lot bleaker. While the tragedy was unfolding, Larry Colburn, Glenn Andreotta and Hugh Thompson attempted to stop the massacre. Using their helicopter to block the US troops, Thompson ordered the vehicle's machine guns

to be trained on American GIs to halt the slaughter. After this, they flew around rescuing Vietnamese from ditches and bunkers. Thompson and his crew initially had a mixed reception upon returning home, but received the Soldier's Medal in 1998 for their heroic act.



## VEHICLES

# M67A2 FLAME THROWER TANK

Sending scorching napalm across the Vietnamese countryside was the job of this US Marine tank

Based on the hull of the M48 Patton tank, the M67 flame-throwing tank did away with the usual gun, instead utilising an M7 fuel and pressure unit, along with an M6 flame gun (the latter of which was hidden inside a dummy 90mm turret in order to prevent the Flame Thrower Tanks from being singled out by enemy fire).

Favoured by the US Marine Corps, the M67 tanks were nicknamed 'Zippos' after the famous manufacturer of cigarette lighters. However, unlike their everyday namesake, there was no novelty about the flame-throwing tanks, spewing out napalm over Viet Cong territory. Alongside the M132 armored flamethrower, the Marines were provided with a fearsome offensive weapon that caused much destruction to the rebel Vietnamese forces.



**YEAR PRODUCED:** 1955  
**ENGINE:** 643HP 29.36-LITRE V12 SUPERCHARGED DIESEL  
**WEAPONS:** M7-6 FLAME THROWER, .50 CAL MACHINE GUN, .30 CAL MACHINE GUN  
**CREW:** 3  
**ARMOUR:** 1"-4.33" CAST STEEL ON HULL, 1"-7" CAST STEEL ON TURRET  
**SPEED:** 30MPH SUSTAINED  
**WEIGHT:** 47,500KG

## NAPALM

Almost 400,000 tons of Napalm were dropped during the war

Developed during WWII, Napalm was first used in Vietnam by the French. A mix of petrol and thickening gel, Napalm burns at 1,000°C and can cover up to 2,000m² when dropped from the air. News reports of Vietnamese civilians accidentally hit by napalm during air attacks horrified the US public.

## WEAPONS



## WEAPONS

# AGENT ORANGE

The horrific consequences of the dangerous defoliant

Over 75,000,000 litres of the acidic herbicide were sprayed from planes and helicopters, devastating vast swathes of Vietnamese jungle in an effort to destroy the Viet Cong's dense jungle cover. The side effects of Agent Orange led to hideous deformities and illnesses among those who came into contact with it



## VEHICLES

# SOVIET MIG-17 VS USAF F-4 PHANTOM II

Soviet and American aeronautic technology clashed in the battle for Vietnamese air superiority

Despite US Air Force pilots being engaged in aerial combat almost continuously since the end of WWII, USAF could only manage a 2:1 kill ratio against the NVAF's MiG-17 and MiG-21 fleet.

The MiG-17 was the tightest turning jet fighter of its day. Despite its thin delta wings, it could sustain turns of up to 8G. While the US began developing air-to-air missile systems for its fighter planes, the MiG's twin cannon system made it a

better bet in close aerial dogfights, accounting for 26 US aircraft from 1965-72.

At the time, The F-4 Phantom II was the West's most prolific fighter craft. Serving under the US Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps, the jet had already set speed and altitude records by the outbreak of the war. A highly versatile

plane, it was capable of participating in intercept and reconnaissance missions.

The F-4G 'Wild Weasel' variant was developed by the US Air Force to find and destroy enemy radar using air-to-surface missiles, which proved highly effective against NVA installations.





EVENTS

# TET OFFENSIVE 30.01.68

The turning point of the war that kick-started the US withdrawal



This surprise attack in January 1968 saw 70,000 NVA and Viet Cong troops swarm into over 100 cities, towns and military bases in South Vietnam. Although the attack was eventually repelled, the show of military strength shocked the South Vietnamese and US military so much that withdrawal talks began shortly after. The toughest fighting was in Hue, where US air strikes bombarded the citadel, which had been taken by the NVA. The Offensive lasted seven months until the NVA and Viet Cong were forced to retreat, with losses of around 37,000 men. It was a huge cost to life, but an important strategic victory.

## BASE UNDER THREAT

Its proximity to the Ho Chi Minh Trail made Khe Sanh a strategically important location. The NVA hoped to repeat the Dien Bien Phu massacre of the first Indochina War.

## UNDER BOMBARDMENT

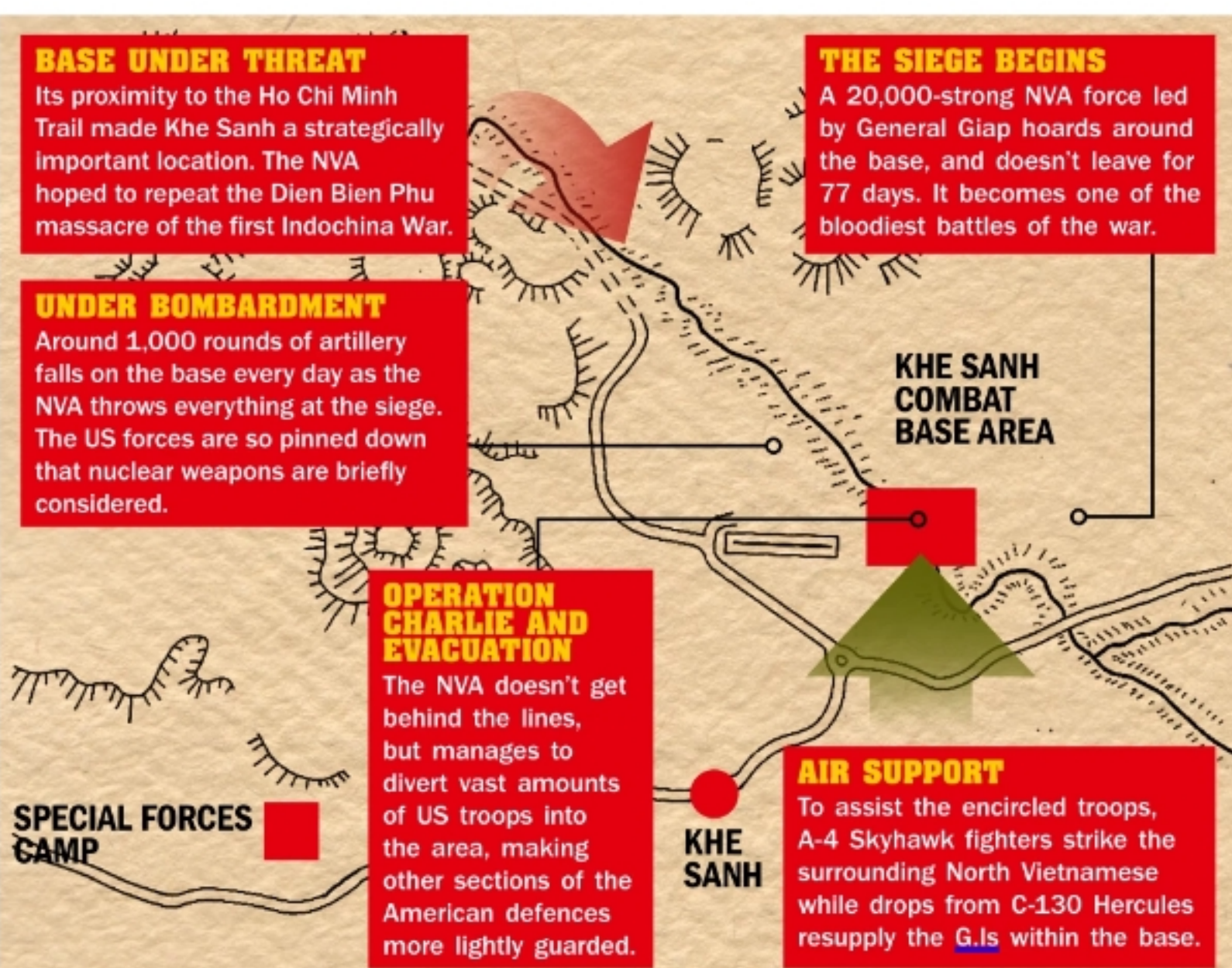
Around 1,000 rounds of artillery falls on the base every day as the NVA throws everything at the siege. The US forces are so pinned down that nuclear weapons are briefly considered.

## OPERATION CHARLIE AND EVACUATION

The NVA doesn't get behind the lines, but manages to divert vast amounts of US troops into the area, making other sections of the American defences more lightly guarded.

## THE SIEGE BEGINS

A 20,000-strong NVA force led by General Giap hoards around the base, and doesn't leave for 77 days. It becomes one of the bloodiest battles of the war.



## AIR SUPPORT

To assist the encircled troops, A-4 Skyhawk fighters strike the surrounding North Vietnamese while drops from C-130 Hercules resupply the G.I.s within the base.

BATTLES & OPERATIONS

# SIEGE OF KHE SANH

An important US base, Khe Sanh bore the brunt of the Tet Offensive

Beginning on 21 January 1968, this siege lasted six months as the NVA tested the US defences to the limit. With 20,000 men surrounding Khe Sanh, the 6,000 US soldiers and their South Vietnamese allies put up a

strong defence, but had to be rescued by air support. 80,000 tons of bombs were dropped on the attackers, who were forced to retreat after losing up to 15,000 men, but earned a strategic victory in the process.

# "I CANNOT DESCRIBE IN WORDS HOW FRIGHTENING IT WAS"

Former US Marine Ken Rodgers witnessed the siege of Khe Sanh and the Tet Offensive



## CAN YOU DESCRIBE YOUR EXPERIENCES OF THE SIEGE OF KHE SANH TO US?

Little food, little water. We were hungry, dirty and frightened. We were pounded with all sorts of incoming, from sniper fire to 152mm artillery. We lost a lot of men. Over 60 KIA in Bravo Company alone. I cannot describe in words how frightening it was. A lot of times, in war, one has five and ten minute encounters with the enemy and those encounters

scare you. But only a little. Khe Sanh was about fear twenty-four-hours a day. Fear piled on top of fear, the levels so numerous and varied they almost defy description.

## WERE YOU UNDER CONSTANT BOMBARDMENT?

As I recall it, we were under almost constant bombardment. I left Khe Sanh, I think, on 4/2/68. I went down to one of the helicopter pads and waited what seemed like all day before I got on a Chinook and flew out for the coast and the Marine base at Dong Ha. I remember the crew chief of the Chinook telling me to sit down but I wouldn't. I stood up because I was afraid ground fire from the NVA would come through the bottom of the hull and kill me.

## HOW AND WHEN DID YOU ORIGINALLY HEAR OF THE ONCOMING TET OFFENSIVE?

I first heard about the Tet Offensive on Armed Forces Radio the day

it happened. We got almost all our news and entertainment that way, unless we listened to Hanoi Hannah. As the Tet Offensive unfolded, we were trapped inside Khe Sanh and we thought the end of the world for us was at hand and just not us personally, but for the American war effort. I suspect that Khe Sanh and Tet were illustrations to the American public that the war effort was a waste of time, humanity and money and they, over the next few years, determined to pull their support for military action.

## WHAT ROLE DID YOU THEN PLAY IN THE WAVES OF ATTACKS THAT FOLLOWED?

At the onset of Tet nothing much changed at Khe Sanh except the ferocity of the attacks increased, more incoming, the NVA attacking outposts outside the combat base itself. They introduced their tank units and stormed some Army Special Forces installations and tried to take some Marine positions, too.

## WAS THE AMOUNT AND FEROCITY OF THE ATTACKS A SHOCK TO YOU? WHAT TACTICS DID YOU USE IN RESPONSE?

Full scale war is a shock and by its nature is ferocious. At Khe Sanh we dug deep, stayed low and waited for the chance to get outside the wire that surrounded our positions and attack attack attack.

## DID YOU RECEIVE ANY WOUNDS?

On 30 March 1968 I was on an assault of a hill southeast of Khe Sanh Combat Base (Known as the Payback Patrol) and was hit in the head with shrapnel from a mortar. Later that day I was hit in the face with white phosphorus from a booby trap.

HEROES & VILLAINS

# NGUYEN HUY HIEU

A key player in the NVA

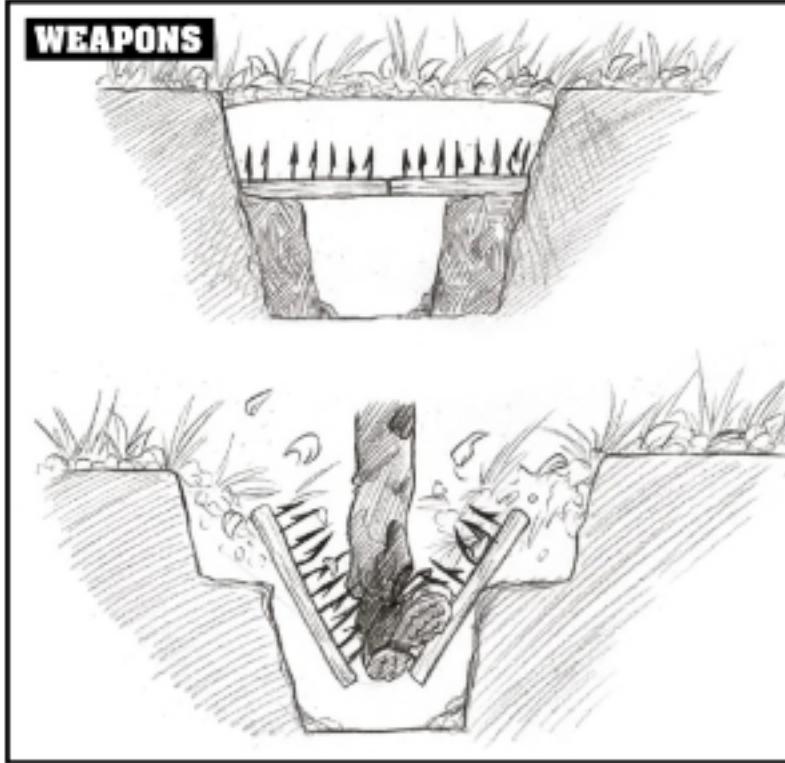
DOB: 1947 ★ REGIMENT COMMANDER ★ NVA



Born in Nam Dinh in North Vietnam, Nguyen Huy Hieu joined the military at 18. During the war, he progressed rapidly through

the ranks, and became one of the youngest captains in the NVA. One of his most notable conflicts was the 1968 Battle of Quang Tri, where the NVA and Viet Cong were defeated while trying to occupy the city of Quang Tri. His service didn't go unnoticed by the North Vietnamese hierarchy, who awarded him the title of Commander of the regiment in 1973. After the war, he was given the title 'Hero of the People's Armed Forces', along with five Liberation Distinguished Service Medals.





## PANJI TRAP

Hidden inconspicuously inside camouflaged holes, these traps were ideal for catching unsuspecting US GIs off guard. These hidden jungle threats could slow a march down, as they were almost impossible to locate. If you were unlucky enough to get caught in one, a bamboo spike or nail plunging through your foot would make you instantly combat ineffective.



## MACE TRAP

What the US had in firepower the Viet Cong made up for with ingenuity. The mace trap was a simple three-metre (ten-foot) log studded with sharp bamboo spikes. It would be triggered by a concealed trip wire on the forest floor, and was used in a similar role to the Panji trap. These mace traps were silent, but could maim and even kill once activated.



## GRENADE TRAP

Less widespread than other traps due to the availability of explosives, this was nonetheless an effective trap. The grenade could be hidden in water, under foliage or up in the treetops. Once again using the element of surprise, a small tug on the tripwire would dislodge the safety pin and incapacitate a group of enemy soldiers in one blast.

### VEHICLES

## BICYCLE

The Viet Cong moved supplies via pedal power

In contrast to the technological might of the US, one of the key vehicles for the North Vietnamese troops was the humble bicycle.

Capable of carrying up to 180kg of supplies, the Viet Cong used their bikes to transport rice, guns and other essential goods. They proved especially useful in ferrying items along the Ho Chi Minh Trail, and were an integral part of the Tet Offensive.

Fully laden, the bicycles were impossible to ride. Instead, they were pushed at pedestrian pace. However, easy to repair and simple to camouflage, they were rarely hit by US attacks. Harrison Salisbury, a New York Times reporter who had spent time in Hanoi, remarked: "I literally believe that without bikes they'd have to get out of the war."



### STRUCTURES

## THE CU CHI TUNNELS

The Viet Cong constructed huge tunnel networks to strike infantry from below



### HEROES & VILLAINS

## VO NGUYEN GIAP

The Commander in Chief of the Vietminh was key to fighting the US campaign

A veteran of World War II and the Indochina War, the 'Red Napoleon' was the leader of the Communist Vietminh, or League for the Independence of Vietnam, and the country's Defence Minister. A great military tactician, he sent frequent aid to the Viet Cong, and is credited with organising the Tet Offensive.

**DOB: 25 AUGUST 1911** ★  
**COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF** ★ **VIETMINH**

After the US withdrawal, Giap helped mastermind the 1975 fall of Saigon. Internal power struggles in the North Vietnamese hierarchy has reduced Giap's depiction in modern Vietnam. In modern texts, much of the glory of victory is credited to General Văn Tiến Dũng rather than Giap.





VEHICLES

# NORTH AMERICAN ROCKWELL OV-10 BRONCO

An unusual warbird designed to do it all in the skies above Vietnam

A large cockpit, seating pilot and co-pilot in tandem, with wings mounted atop the fuselage and twin booms with interconnecting stabiliser, North American Rockwell's OV-10 Bronco certainly cut a distinctive shape in the air.

Designed and tested in the early Sixties with the counter-insurgency combat of Vietnam in mind, the OV-10 was capable of short take-offs and landings, ideal for use from larger amphibious assault ships or from unprepared

**YEAR PRODUCED:** 1965  
**ENGINE:** 2 X 715HP GARRETT T76 TURBOPROPS  
**WEAPONS:** 4 X 7.62MM MACHINE GUNS  
**CREW:** 2  
**SPEED:** 281MPH MAX.  
**WEIGHT:** 3,125KG UNLADEN

airfields. It could also be started without ground equipment and, if needed, run on automotive petrol with little loss of performance.

Capable of carrying 1,450kg of cargo, the OV-10 was a versatile machine after its introduction into Vietnam in 1969, most at home during forward air control and

reconnaissance missions. However, despite aiding in numerous air strikes, the Bronco wasn't without its problems. 81 OV-10 Broncos were lost in Vietnam, with a low top speed making it an easy target for enemy fighters, and its slow climb rate causing some US pilots to crash into the hilly terrain.



VEHICLES

## ATC 'MONITOR' BOAT

Patrolling the rivers was entrusted to converted landing craft

Inspired by its French counterparts' actions during the First Indochina War, the US Navy and Army formed the Mobile Riverine Force to combat Viet Cong forces in the Mekong Delta, predominantly using Armoured Troop Carriers (ATCs) to ferry up to 40 soldiers and launch river-based assaults in water five feet or deeper.

The ATCs were based on the Fifties LCM-6 landing craft design, using quarter-inch hardened steel armour plating to protect the superstructure and a distinctive bow ramp used for deploying troops and loading supplies. In 61-foot 'Monitor' form, the ATC boat was transformed into a floating artillery platform, adding either a 81mm mortar or a 105mm Howitzer to the usual ATC armaments.

One of the finest moments for the ATCs in Vietnam was during Operation Game Warden on 18 December 1965. Intending to prevent the Viet Cong from accessing the vital supplies along the Mekong Delta, US forces launched a rapid surprise attack at a number of small enemy ports, destroying much of the Viet Cong fleet stationed there.



BATTLES & OPERATIONS

## HAMBURGER HILL

US forces attempt to take the A Shau Valley, an important NVA route to South Vietnam

Operation Apache Snow was designed to restrict the North Vietnamese advance southwards. The valley on the border with Laos had become littered with NVA bases, and the Ap Bia Mountain – or Hamburger Hill – was one of the major centres. 1,800 US and South Vietnamese troops managed to defeat 800

NVA soldiers after a long, drawn-out battle where the heavy US infantry struggled in the thick undergrowth of the hill's slopes. The battle is known for various friendly fire incidents and a hollow US victory that many back home saw as a senseless battle in a senseless war.





# NAVY SEAL WEAPONS

## CARL GUSTAV M/45

The legendary 'Swedish-K' favoured by US Special Forces in Vietnam

Developed by neutral Sweden during WWII, the rugged M/45 became extremely popular with CIA operators and US Navy SEALs in Vietnam. The 1966 Swedish arms embargo ended export of the M/45 to the US. This led Smith & Wesson to produce the M76, an unashamed direct copy of the 'Swedish-K'.



## KA-BAR

The utilitarian combat knife carried by thousands of US servicemen

Hanging from the belt of most US servicemen in Vietnam, the Ka-Bar, first adopted in 1942, was invaluable. It was used for everything from probing for mines to opening C-rations.



## S&W MODEL 39

A fast-firing 9mm favourite

Smith & Wesson's first modern automatic pistol was used by the Navy SEALs during covert missions, a model adapted with a sound suppressor was nicknamed the 'Hush Puppy'.



### HEROES & VILLAINS

## NGUYEN NGOC LOAN

**DOB: 11 DECEMBER 1930** **NATIONAL POLICE COMMANDER** **SOUTH VIETNAMESE**

The man behind one of the most infamous images of the war was South Vietnam's brutal and unsympathetic chief of police

Nguyen Ngoc Loan was a staunch South Vietnamese nationalist, and led the national police force against the Viet Cong. He is remembered for his irrational rages and bad temper, as well as his insistence that only local authorities could arrest and detain South Vietnamese citizens. Though unpopular with the American forces, he was an efficient police commander who performed his job competently.

However, his life changed on 1 February 1968 with his role in perhaps the most iconic image of the war, when he shot Viet Cong prisoner Nguyen Van Lem in



cold blood after his deputy hesitated to do so. The incident helped spark negative public opinion against the war as an Associated Press photographer caught the full anguish on the victim's face in the photo. Loan had reason to use force (Lem was the captain of a Viet Cong death squad who had been targeting the families of the South Vietnam Police), but the shooting struck a nerve worldwide.

Loan eventually escaped on a plane at the fall of Saigon, and lived the rest of his life selling pizza in Washington DC.

### WEAPONS

## RPD

The versatile Russian light machine gun favoured by the VC



Firing the same round as the AK47 the RPD fed from a formidable 100-round drum. Its fixed barrel meant it had to be fired in short bursts to avoid over-heating, but it was lighter than the bulky M60, making it the ideal light machine gun for Viet Cong insurgents.

### EVENTS

## FALL OF SAIGON 30.04.75

Communist forces advance unopposed into the South Vietnamese capital

In seven short weeks in 1975, the Communist forces swept south towards the capital of the South and their ultimate goal, Saigon. With Vietnamisation a failure, the South Vietnamese army was in disarray as the gates of Saigon were threatened for the first time in ten years. The city fell on 30 April as NVA tanks rolled through the streets with only minimal resistance from the scattered Southern forces. By this time the US embassy had safely been evacuated, and President Thieu had already fled to Taiwan. Saigon was renamed 'Ho Chi Minh City', and the entire country now belonged to the Communist government.





# KEY PLAYER: JOHN F KENNEDY

LEADING THE WESTERN DEMOCRACIES, AMERICAN PRESIDENT JOHN F KENNEDY CONFRONTED THE SOVIET UNION DURING THE HOTTEST PERIOD OF THE COLD WAR

**D**uring a speech to visiting Western dignitaries in Moscow in November 1956, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev scowled a belligerent warning that resonated around the world. "We will bury you," he threatened matter-of-factly. A number of the invited guests stood up and immediately left the room. The chill of the Cold War was nearing the most frigid period in its half century reign of ideological, economic, and nuclear arms-tinged tension.

Into this maelstrom of mistrust stepped the first American president born in the 20th century. On 20 January 1961, John F Kennedy captured the world stage with his inaugural address from the East Portico of the US Capitol. In his steady, clipped New England brogue, Kennedy emphatically picked up the gauntlet that his adversary had so forcefully thrown down.

"Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike," Kennedy said, "that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans – born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace..."

"Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and success of liberty."

The phrase "bitter peace" was a direct reference to the Cold War, which had already come to dominate the political landscape. President Kennedy understood the magnitude of the threat of global communism and pledged to confront it forcefully. The Kennedy Doctrine developed into an expansion of previous presidential postures, and the containment of communism was its cornerstone. During Kennedy's brief tenure as the 35th president, ample opportunities to exercise that doctrine presented themselves.

Events in Berlin, Eastern Europe, Vietnam and elsewhere in Southeast Asia, Cuba and Latin America, as well as in the emerging Third World, challenged the resolve of the United States and the Western democracies. Historians still debate the performance of the Kennedy administration, and the turbulent period of the early 1960s continues to shape events today.

Beyond his stirring words, 42-year-old John F Kennedy exuded confidence, a new and fresh perspective on the United States and the world. Although he appeared immensely popular, his election in November 1959 had been a near-run thing against Republican Richard Nixon. The popular vote was a virtual dead heat, Kennedy with 49.72 percent and Nixon 49.55 percent. The electoral college awarded Kennedy the White House 303 votes to 219, although Nixon carried 26 states to Kennedy's 22.

Nevertheless, John F Kennedy had seemed destined for political greatness. His convoluted path to power was spurred on by a wealthy, well-connected Boston-area family with deep roots in the political arena. Born the second of nine children on 29 May 1917, to Joseph P Kennedy and Rose Fitzgerald Kennedy, he was educated at the prestigious Choate prep school and Harvard University. He became the scion of the family when his older brother, Joseph P Kennedy, Jr, was killed in World War II.

The elder Joseph Kennedy, a ruthlessly ambitious man, had seen his own political

aspirations peak with an appointment as ambassador to Great Britain in the administration of Democrat President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. Undeterred, the father had projected his own desire for the presidency on to his eldest son. With Joseph Jr's death, young Jack, as he was known to family and friends, inherited the mantle and is said to have even declared one day that he would become the first Roman Catholic president in the history of the United States of America.

A bona fide war hero, Jack Kennedy served with distinction in the US Navy during World War II. At the age of 22, he authored *Why England Slept*, a treatise on Great Britain's role in the Munich Conference of 1938 and the policy of appeasement that contributed to the outbreak of the war in Europe and its consequences. The book became a bestseller.

From 1947 to 1960, he held office as the representative of the 11th District of Massachusetts in the US House of Representatives and then as a US senator from his home state. In 1957, Kennedy's book



President Kennedy with Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev during a 1961 meeting in Vienna



## KEY PLAYER: JOHN F. KENNEDY

■ President John F. Kennedy pursued a policy of containment during the difficult days of the Cold War in the early 1960s







■ The Kennedy family poses in 1931, a year before the youngest child, Ted, was born. John F Kennedy is on the left



*Profiles In Courage*, vignettes of US senators who acted courageously during difficult times, won a Pulitzer Prize. His family's wealth, notoriety, and tremendous political connections – particularly among labour unions – propelled him to the highest office in the land.

On the domestic front, Kennedy supported the burgeoning Civil Rights Movement and audaciously challenged the United States to put a man on the Moon by the end of the 1960s.

Meanwhile, the growing threat of communist expansion demanded continuous attention to foreign relations. Kennedy supported the Bay of Pigs invasion, an abortive attempt to topple the Marxist regime of Fidel Castro in Cuba, and stood firm as the USA and the Soviet Union played a high-stakes game of nuclear brinkmanship during the Cuban Missile Crisis.

Kennedy sent military advisers to South Vietnam in a vain hope to quell the nationalist-communist movement under Ho Chi Minh that sought to unite that nation by force of arms. He vacillated over the future role of the American military in Southeast Asia, and his final stance on the issue will never be fully known. He supported the nation of Israel and took steps to forge an enduring military alliance with the state. He travelled extensively and reassured heads of state that the US maintained an unwavering commitment to freedom, mutual

defence and military aid if necessary to stop the spread of communism.

Outwardly, the Kennedy family was synonymous with political power and prosperity. However, tragedy also stalked them. The wartime loss of his brother Joseph Jr, sister Kathleen 'Kick' Kennedy's death in a 1948 plane crash, as well as the mental incapacitation of another sister, Rosemary, cast a shadow across the Kennedy clan.



Jack Kennedy wed the glamorous Jacqueline Bouvier on 12 September 1953, and the couple's life appeared idyllic. However, they were to experience a series of heartbreaking losses. Jackie suffered a miscarriage in 1955, gave birth to a stillborn daughter a year later, and in August 1963, a son, Patrick, died of a lung problem only two days after his birth. Still, the fashionable first couple and their two surviving children, Carolyn and John Jr, captivated the popular imagination, so much so that the family's brief time in the White House was known as "Camelot".

Outwardly, John F Kennedy appeared the picture of youthful vigour. He hobnobbed with the rich and famous, counting such stars as Frank Sinatra among his friends and being serenaded by Marilyn Monroe on his 45th birthday. However, as the press looked aside, he is reputed to have had numerous extramarital affairs, and throughout his life the president was plagued with health problems that were largely kept hidden from public view.

Kennedy suffered from chronic back problems, aggravated during his service with the navy. He received the last rites of the Catholic Church three times before his election to the presidency. Kennedy was reported to have suffered from Addison's Disease, a rare disorder affecting the adrenal glands, and he was believed to have been prescribed large doses of steroids to deal with constant pain and inflammation. The extent to which any of these health concerns influenced his conduct of foreign and domestic policy as president is the topic of conjecture.

On 22 November 1963, President Kennedy and the first lady travelled to Dallas, Texas, in an early foray toward the campaign for re-election in 1964. As his motorcade passed through the city streets, the president rode in an open limousine. Shots rang out from the sixth floor of the Texas School Book Depository

★  
**OUTWARDLY, JOHN F KENNEDY APPEARED THE PICTURE OF YOUTHFUL VIGOUR. HE HOBNOBBED WITH THE RICH AND FAMOUS**  
★





■ Moments before the assassination, President and Mrs. Kennedy ride in their open topped limousine through the streets of Dallas

building. Mortally wounded by bullets from the cheap rifle of assassin Lee Harvey Oswald, Kennedy was pronounced dead at Parkland Hospital a short time later.

When the news broke, the nation was plunged into mourning. Not since the assassination of Abraham Lincoln a century earlier had such immense grief gripped the American people. The images of the horrific event and the state funeral that followed are seared in the collective national psyche. Although the general consensus is that Oswald acted alone, conspiracy theories persist, pointing the accusatory finger at Cuba's Castro, organised crime, the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), and even members of Kennedy's own government in an orchestrated coup d'etat.

The legacy of John F. Kennedy is one of a stalwart Cold Warrior, a charismatic and capable but flawed leader cut down in the prime of life, and perhaps potential unrealised.



## THE MAKING OF A PRESIDENT

JFK was a national hero, recognised for the astonishing achievements in his short life

### 1 AUGUST 1943

#### Heroism aboard PT-109

On patrol in the dark of night in Blackett Strait near the Solomon Islands of the South Pacific, Lieutenant John F. Kennedy commanded the swift, heavily armed PT-109 (patrol torpedo boat), in search of enemy shipping. Without warning, the small craft was rammed by the Japanese destroyer Amagiri. Kennedy saved the lives of several crewmen.

### 26 JUNE 1963

#### Historic address in Berlin

Delivering a rousing speech of hope and encouragement to the people of Berlin 22 months after the government of East Germany, a puppet of the Soviet Union, had constructed the infamous Berlin Wall, President Kennedy intoned, "Ich bin ein Berliner!" which translated as "I am a citizen of Berlin!" The message was a clear statement of support for West Germany.

### 5 AUGUST 1963

#### Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty

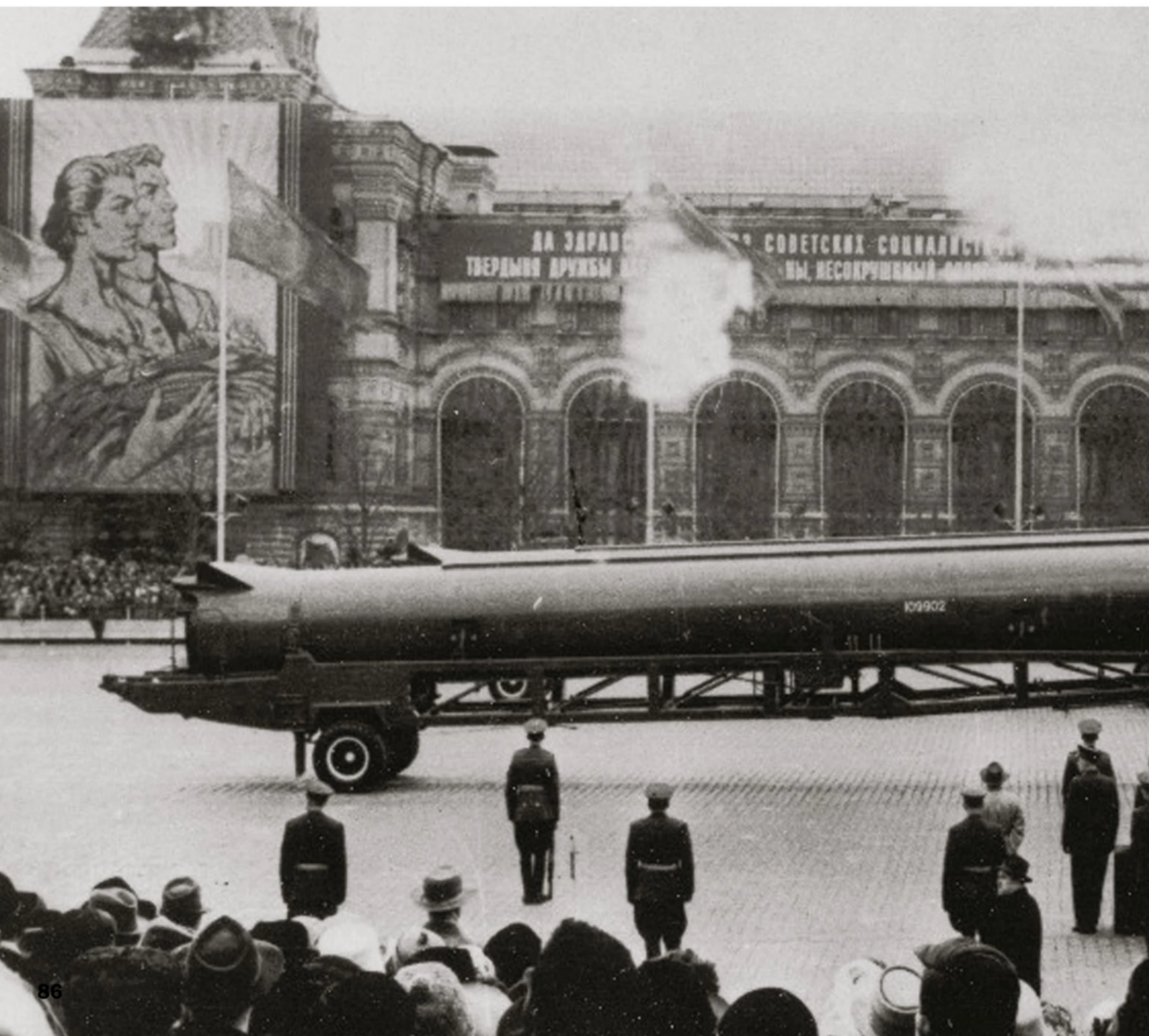
Despite the harsh rhetoric of the Cold War, President Kennedy, British Prime Minister Sir Alec Douglas-Home and Soviet Premier Khrushchev recognised the hazards posed by unbridled nuclear testing. Negotiations dragged on for eight years, but finally the agreement ended nuclear testing underwater, in the atmosphere, and in outer space.



# 13 DAYS OF ARMAGEDDON

AT THE HEIGHT OF THE COLD WAR, CUBA BECAME THE CENTRE OF A DEADLY FACE-OFF BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE USSR

**I**n October 1962 the world almost ended. At the height of the Cold War, the United States of America and the Soviet Union found themselves in a tense standoff over Russian medium and intermediate-range ballistic missiles being stockpiled in bases in the rebellious Republic of Cuba. Over a terrifying 13 days, the two superpowers came to the brink of nuclear war, with their mutually assured destruction looking alarmingly possible. To the Russians, this dark chapter of their history is referred to as the Caribbean Crisis. To the Cubans, it's the October Crisis. But to the United States and much of the rest of the world, the words 'the Cuban Missile Crisis' are those that invoke that particular chill of almost unimaginable horror only narrowly averted.





By the time of the Crisis, the United States and Russia had been engaged in their Cold War for almost 20 years since the end of the Second World War – some trace it back even further to the First World War. Not a conflict in the usual sense, it had mostly been an affair played out through espionage rather than military force, although the superpowers had each involved themselves in regional wars in China, Greece and Korea. After 1945, the single-party Marxist-Leninist Soviet State found

itself in complete ideological opposition to the States' 'free' capitalist society, consolidating its control over the Eastern Bloc, while the United States tried to contain it through international initiatives like NATO. Having wrestled for control and influence in Latin America and the decolonising states of Africa, the Middle East and Southeast Asia in the intervening years, events between the two opponents finally came to a long-threatened head in Cuba.

## ★ THE US GOVERNMENT SUDDENLY FOUND ITSELF ON THE RECEIVING END OF HARSH CRITICISM FROM CASTRO ★

■ A Soviet nuclear missile being displayed in the Red Square in Moscow



The immediate roots of the Cuban Missile Crisis lay in Cuba's regime change of 1959: a revolution that ousted incumbent dictator Fulgencio Batista and installed the communist commander-in-chief of the Cuban Revolutionary Army, Fidel Castro, as prime minister and later president. As supporters of Batista and other Latin American dictators, the US government suddenly found itself on the receiving end of harsh criticism from Castro when he opened diplomatic relations with them. Their response was a failed attempt to assassinate Castro, after which he demanded the complete withdrawal of the US military from Guantánamo Bay. They refused and remain there; it's the only US military base in a country it doesn't officially recognise.

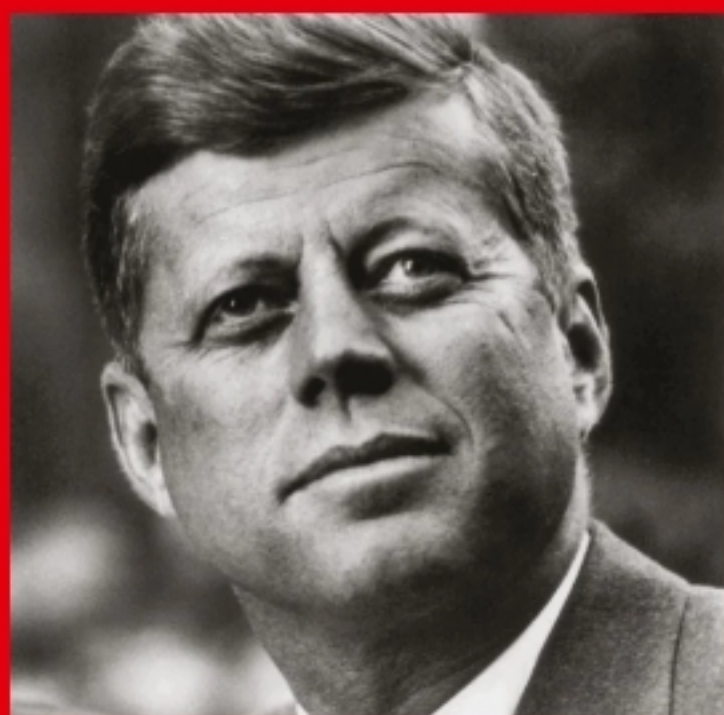
Castro travelled to the US in the spring of 1959 to meet with President Dwight D. Eisenhower, but was snubbed by him and met only by Vice President Richard Nixon. Their meeting did not go well, and Castro further alienated the US when he announced to the United Nations that Cuba would maintain a neutral position in the fractious relationship between the USA and the USSR. Subsequent policies redistributing Cuba's wealth were predictably unpopular with Americans, who owned land there and were seeing it removed from them at rates of compensation they were unhappy with. The CIA launched another failed assassination attempt against Castro, and the US military began launching secret bombing raids against Cuban sugar facilities in October 1959, targeting one of its most lucrative exports. American attacks on Cuban oil refineries and civilian targets in Havana followed, all of which the US officially denied.

Castro signed a trade deal with Soviet Deputy Prime Minister Anastas Mikoyan in February 1960, hoping it would gain him more



■ These demonstrators were part of the 'Women strike for peace' movement in 1962





## KENNEDY

JFK became president in 1960 for the Democratic Party. He aimed to end racial segregation in schools and public places and liberalised immigration laws. He strengthened unemployment benefits and called on the nations of the world to band together to fight poverty, hunger and disease. He also urged Americans to be active citizens, famously saying, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country."

With his presidency at the height of the Cold War, Kennedy was a vehement anti-Communist. He fought Communism in developing nations and introduced the Space Race as much from a perceived necessity to beat the Russians to the Moon as for the scientific achievement. As well as the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy's administration intervened in Vietnam against Communists there. After Cuba, Kennedy's US negotiated a nuclear test ban treaty with the USSR and the UK.

Kennedy served in the US Navy from 1941 until 1945. He was working in the office of the secretary of the Navy when the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor took place, but he subsequently saw action in Panama and the Pacific, commanding torpedo boats and achieving the rank of lieutenant. He received the Purple Heart and the WWII Victory Medal among several other decorations. He was finally released from active service due to a recurring back injury.

Among Kennedy's main advisors were Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, Senate Majority Leader Mike Mansfield, Secretary of Defence Robert S McNamara and Attorney General Robert F Kennedy, JFK's brother. During the Cuban Missile Crisis, Kennedy convened the special advisory committee EXCOMM, including all the above, Ambassador to the Soviet Union Llewellyn Thompson, with members of the CIA and the Defence Department.

### POLITICAL STANCE

### FOREIGN POLICY

### MILITARY EXPERIENCE

### ADVISORS



## KHRUSHCHEV

Khrushchev was first secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union from 1958 until 1964. He was responsible for moving the Communist Party away from Stalinism, ending forced labour and closing the Gulags. He was an early backer of the Soviet Space Programme, and was behind some relatively liberal domestic policies, such as allowing more freedom to the arts and opening up the opportunity for ordinary Soviets to travel abroad.

The Soviet premier appointed himself as head of the USSR's UN delegation in 1960, where he was accused of a double standard by claiming to oppose colonialism while at the same time attempting Communist domination of Eastern Europe and Southeast Asia and the Third World. Achieving the first manned space flight led the world to infer the USSR's nuclear weapons programme was further ahead than it was. Khrushchev was happy not to disabuse anyone of that notion.

He served in the Red Army as a political commissar, both during the Russian Civil War (1917-1922) and WWII. The rank was roughly equal to that of a unit commander, but the commissar has the military to countermand the commander's orders when he deems it necessary. Khrushchev's primary function was as a political intermediary between troops and Moscow. He did see action at the Defence of Stalingrad in 1942, though, which he remained proud of for the rest of his life.

Extraordinary as it seems, Khrushchev, after rising to power, decided Soviet policy alone, without any recourse to advisors at all. This could, of course, be viewed as a weakness since it cut his decision-making process off from others, whose input may have been valuable. But it also allowed his instincts free reign: a positive thing in regard to the Cuban Missile Crisis, where his levelheaded inclination toward peace and negotiation arguably averted a global catastrophe.



Adlai Stevenson showing photos of nuclear missiles in Cuba to the UN Security Council





■ A group of Cuban soldiers who helped in fighting the Bay of Pigs invasion

## THE BAY OF PIGS

The failed invasion that led to the Crisis

### WHY IT HAPPENED

- Growing concern in the United States over the new left-wing direction of Cuba's politics after the removal of dictator Fulgencio Batista by revolutionaries led by Fidel Castro.
- US concern over trials and subsequent executions of former Batista supporters.
- Castro was an outspoken critic of the USA.

### WHAT WENT WRONG?

A damning CIA report from November 1961 outlined a catalogue of points that made the attempted invasion doomed to failure from the beginning. Its author, Inspector General Lyman B. Kirkpatrick, identified that there were no policies or contingency plans in place should the invasion have succeeded. Insufficient and poorly managed staff had been assigned to the project, relatively few of whom even spoke Spanish. US intelligence in Cuba had been improperly analysed. There had been little success in organising internal resistance in Cuba, or of involving exiles from the Castro regime or counter-revolutionaries. And the operation had simply been too big: jumping from covert guerrilla action to a full-blown military intervention in a manner that made 'plausible deniability' impossible.

### PRELUDE TO INVASION

16 April 1961

The US mounts diversionary activities around other Cuban locations, to disguise its true intentions. These include the 'Phony War' of 16 April, around Baracoa and Guantánamo. Cuban revolutionary military forces scramble to meet their US attackers, putting up more of a fight than the US expects.

### DAY ONE

17 April

1,400 US troops, four transport ships and a fleet of smaller fibreglass boats enter the Bay of Pigs. Cuba responds with fighter jets and bombers. US paratroopers are dropped onto the island, but land in a swamp and lose all their equipment. Osvaldo Ramirez, leader of the Cuban resistance against Castro, is captured and summarily executed by Castro's supporters.

### DAY TWO

18 April

Cuban troops, tanks and militia force the invaders and resistance to retreat in several areas. CIA pilots in B-26 bomber planes use bombs, napalm and rockets against Cuban targets, causing civilian casualties alongside their intended police and military victims.

### DAY THREE

19 April

Four US airmen are killed when Cuban forces mount a spirited defence against another CIA air attack. Anti-Castro forces on the ground, with their air support lost and ammunition steadily running out, are forced to retreat in the face of a Cuban onslaught and have to be evacuated. The US withdraws from the invasion.

### THE AFTERMATH

20 April onwards

US destroyers search for survivors along the Cuban coast while intelligence-gathering flights continue. Hundreds of executions take place in Cuba as retaliation against the opposition, and Castro gloats over his prisoners of war. He offers the US a deal to exchange them for tractors. They eventually get food and medicine instead.

## TIMELINE OF EVENTS

**ASSASSINATION ATTEMPTS AND ATTACKS ON HAVANA TOOK PLACE, ALL OF WHICH THE US OFFICIALLY DENIED**

leverage in the US. The opposite was true, and Eisenhower, pushed to the limits of his patience with the upstart Cuba, ordered the CIA to overthrow the Republic. Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev publicly came out in support of Cuba; America launched yet another three failed Castro assassination attempts, one of them involving the Mafia; and by April of 1961, America had both imposed full trade and economic sanctions against Cuba and undertaken a covert attempted invasion. The newly elected president, John F. Kennedy, continued to deny any such activity, but by now the American press were on the case and the word was out. Khrushchev warned that the Soviets would intervene against any aggression from the US toward Cuba, and the US, after the death of 200 of its soldiers and the loss of a further thousand as prisoners of war in the Bay of Pigs debacle, was forced to call off its incursion. Kennedy and his government had been thoroughly humiliated.

Beginning to see Kennedy as weak, Khrushchev and the Soviets used the lull to seize an opportunity. In August of 1962, reports began reaching the US from Cuba that Soviet trucks loaded with suspicious equipment had been seen on the island. As retaliation

for the US installing its own nuclear missiles close to the USSR, Russia was doing the same in the Caribbean. A sizeable arsenal of SS-4 nuclear warheads had been installed on the island – capable of reaching the US east coast – including the political hub of Washington, DC. While initially claiming they were simply providing non-nuclear surface-to-air missiles for Cuba's defence against its hostile neighbours, Khrushchev's real agenda was to gain a stronger political foothold both against the US and its allies in Britain and Europe.

Kennedy's response was to set up EXCOMM – the Executive Committee of the National Security Council – which suggested six options. Doing nothing was obviously impossible, but diplomacy was already not working; threatening Castro generally achieved the opposite of the desired effect; and either war with or the occupation of Cuba was an enormous risk. The ultimate decision, then, was to blockade the island, although for legal reasons (it would be considered an act of

war) this was sold as a 'quarantine' of Cuba.

At 7pm on 22 October 1962, Kennedy announced on US television and radio that this 'quarantine' of Cuba was in effect immediately, stopping the shipment of all offensive military equipment to Cuba. 5,000 US troops were deployed to the Guantánamo base, along

with airborne and naval forces. In turn,

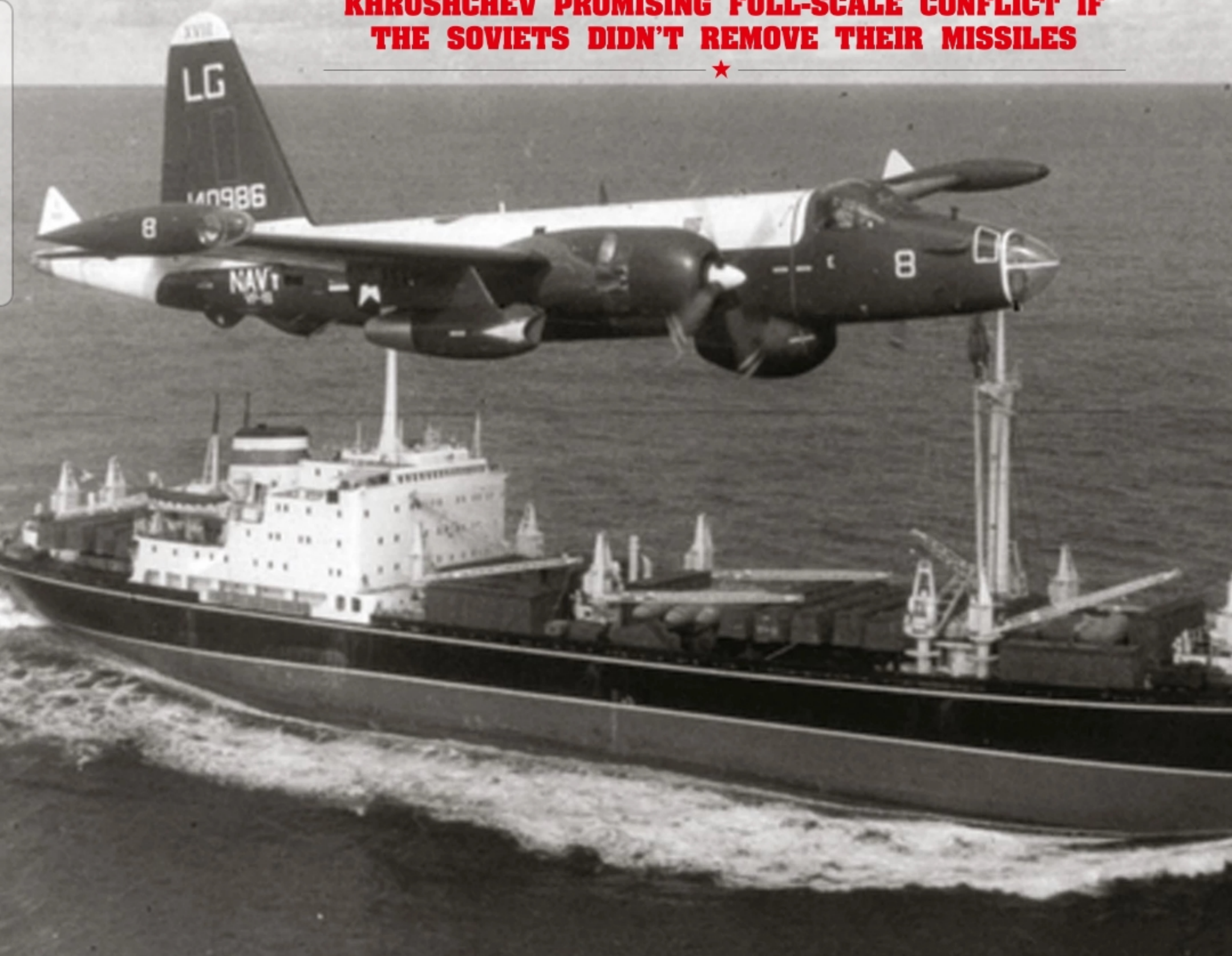
Castro began to mobilise Cuba's forces, and Khrushchev declared the quarantine to be a hostile manoeuvre, threatening that war with the United States was becoming a very real possibility if the States didn't leave Cuba alone.

The next day, US planes ascertained that the Soviets were actually performing launch tests on their missiles, leading US ships to take up position off

Cuba's coastline, barring any ships from getting any nearer to the island. By 25 October, Kennedy had written to Khrushchev promising full-scale conflict if the Soviets didn't remove their missiles from Cuban soil. Khrushchev's eventual response on 26 October was to suggest a compromise: the USSR would



★  
**BY 25 OCTOBER, KENNEDY HAD WRITTEN TO KHRUSHCHEV PROMISING FULL-SCALE CONFLICT IF THE SOVIETS DIDN'T REMOVE THEIR MISSILES**  
 ★



## THE LONGEST 13 DAYS IN HISTORY

A day-by-day account of the events of the Cuban Missile Crisis

### 16 OCTOBER

President Kennedy and his staff are briefed on reconnaissance photos of Russian missile bases under construction in Cuba. Kennedy maintains his public schedule while covertly discussing whether to launch air strikes or blockade Cuba's coasts.

### 17 OCTOBER

Kennedy continues his official public engagements, with the president feeling it important to keep up appearances rather than arouse concern. He has lunch with Crown Prince Hassan of Libya and visits Connecticut to support Democratic election candidates.

### 18 OCTOBER

Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko insists that Russia's aid to Cuba is purely in the cause of defence and presents no threat to the USA. Kennedy warns Gromyko of grave consequences should Soviet nuclear weapons be found on Cuban soil.

### 19 OCTOBER

Kennedy heads out on the congressional campaign trail to Ohio and Illinois, as previously scheduled before the missile crisis surfaced. Debate continues to rage among his advisors as to the best course of action in Cuba as Kennedy travels.

### 20 OCTOBER

Kennedy returns to Washington, and after an intense five hours of deliberation, the plan to blockade – or 'quarantine' – Cuba is finally decided upon. Work begins on the military and naval plans, and on drafting a speech to inform the public of the situation.

### 21 OCTOBER

Another day of meetings and phone calls on both sides. Tactical Air Commander Walter Sweeney advises Kennedy that an air strike against Cuba could not guarantee the complete destruction of all the Russian missiles on the ground.





■ A Neptune warplane flying over a Soviet transport ship in October 1962

withdraw its nuclear arsenal in exchange for a legal assurance from the US that it would never invade Cuba again, or support any other country attempting to do so.

Kennedy was willing to use this as the basis for some serious negotiations, but Castro, caught in the middle of the standoff, remained unconvinced, distrustful of Kennedy. He wrote to Khrushchev outlining his belief that the US would eventually invade Cuba regardless of what had been agreed, and giving carte-blanche to the Soviets to remain in Cuba with their missiles, as the island's first best line of defence and deterrent. "I believe the imperialists' aggressiveness is extremely dangerous," said the Cuban prime minister in what's now known as 'The Armageddon Letter'. "If they actually carry out the brutal act of invading Cuba in violation of international law and morality, that would be the moment to eliminate such danger forever through an act of clear legitimate defence, however harsh and terrible the solution would be."

On 27 October the confrontation escalated alarmingly, when US Air Force Major Rudolf Anderson was shot down and killed in his F-102 fighter when he strayed into Cuban airspace. Further US reconnaissance aircraft attempting to ascertain the lie of the land were also fired upon from the ground, while at practically the same time, dangerous events were occurring beneath the waters of the Caribbean. The US naval destroyer USS Beale had tracked down the Soviet submarine B-59 and begun dropping depth charges on it, scoring several hits. However, the Beale's crew didn't know the B-59 was carrying a 15-kiloton nuclear torpedo. Running out of air and surrounded by ships that wouldn't allow it to surface, the B-59's officers came horrendously close to desperately launching their payload before Captain Vasili Arkhipov managed to persuade his comrades to stand down and surrender. He may well have saved the world in the process.

As all this was occurring, Kennedy received another letter from Khrushchev offering to withdraw his weapons from Cuba if the US would do the same in Turkey. The attacks on the US planes had not been officially

sanctioned by the Russians, but had been on the orders of commanders acting independently. The USSR seemed dangerously close to losing control of its own forces, and if that happened, catastrophic consequences might have been on the cards.

Kennedy replied to Khrushchev accepting his terms: pledging the US would never again invade Cuba if the Russian warheads were removed and, in a private addendum, agreeing to remove the USA's own missiles threatening the USSR from Turkey. Khrushchev revealed later that Kennedy also offered to remove the US's nuclear arsenal from Italy: a symbolic gesture only, since the weapons in Italy were obsolete at the time. At 9am on 28 October, a message

from Khrushchev was broadcast on Radio Moscow, stating that work at the Russian weapon sites in Cuba would cease immediately, and that the arsenal would be dismantled and returned to the USSR. A very relieved President Kennedy responded to the broadcast immediately, promising to honour the agreement and calling Khrushchev's decision "an important and constructive contribution to

**THE DECISION TO BLOCKADE THE ISLAND WAS [FOR LEGAL REASONS] SOLD AS A 'QUARANTINE' OF CUBA**



■ Kennedy signing the Cuba Quarantine Proclamation

## 22 OCTOBER

Kennedy informs UK PM Harold MacMillan of the ongoing crisis and writes to Khrushchev. In the letter, Kennedy writes: "Not you or any other sane man would [...] deliberately plunge the world into war which no country could win." He also makes a public address on US television.

## 23 OCTOBER

The US 'quarantine' ships move into place around Cuba, while Soviet submarines lurk nearby. Kennedy asks Khrushchev to prevent any Russian vessels from approaching Cuba. Robert Kennedy visits the Soviet Embassy to meet with their ambassador.

## 24 OCTOBER

Khrushchev responds to Kennedy's letters with hostility, complaining the US is using intimidation. "You are no longer appealing to reason," says the Soviet premier. "You are threatening that if we do not give in to your demands you will use force."

## 25 OCTOBER

Kennedy writes to Khrushchev urging a Russian withdrawal from Cuba, and rejects UN Secretary General U. Thant's proposal of a 'cooling-off period', as Soviet missiles would remain in Cuba. Heated debates between the US and the USSR take place at the UN.

## 26 OCTOBER

Castro writes to Khrushchev urging him not to back down, even if it means making a stand with catastrophic force. But Khrushchev contacts Kennedy to suggest a solution: the USA's removal of its own nuclear weapons from Turkey and Italy in exchange for the USSR's withdrawal from Cuba.

## 27 OCTOBER

A US U-2 plane is shot down over Cuban airspace by Soviet missiles, and the pilot is killed. Meanwhile, a Russian submarine with a nuclear warhead aboard is attacked. Robert Kennedy secretly meets with the Soviet ambassador and cautious terms are agreed between them.

## 28 OCTOBER

Radio Moscow announces the USSR has agreed to leave Cuba on the understanding that the US can never again attempt an invasion, and that US WMDs will be removed from sites near Russia. Castro is furious to learn the news from public radio.



## THE HOTLINE

It's good to talk

Pictured in the popular imagination as a red telephone, the Moscow-Washington hotline has never been a phone at all. It began life as a Teletype system, and kept that form for two decades until it was replaced with fax machines. Since 2008 it's been a secure computer link for email messages.

The hotline was set up immediately after the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1963, linking the Pentagon directly to the Kremlin, so that immediate communication can begin should any hostilities or 'misunderstandings' arise. During the Crisis it dangerously often took many hours for the US to translate and decode Khrushchev's messages.

While it seems like a sensible idea, Kennedy was criticised by the Republican Party of the time over the hotline's implementation. The accusation was that Kennedy would alienate his "proven allies" by speaking to his "sworn enemies" first!

peace." Castro meanwhile, who had not been consulted by either side, was furious to learn the news from the radio.

The US 'quarantine' of Cuba didn't end immediately, with aerial reconnaissance continuing to monitor whether the Soviets were packing up as promised. These missions were thankfully uneventful, and the Russian missiles and their supporting equipment were successfully loaded onto eight ships, leaving Cuban waters between 5 and 9 November. The blockade officially ended on 20 November and the USA removed its nuclear missiles from Turkey the following April. Castro may have been angry, and Soviet-Cuban relations significantly cooled, but the fact was that his position had been thoroughly strengthened by the Crisis. The US couldn't now attack Cuba – or Castro personally – without breaking the terms of their own peace treaty and risking the full weight of Russian reprisal.

In the aftermath of the Crisis, the Moscow-Washington hotline was set up, directly connecting the two political superpowers to facilitate easier negotiation should such a dire situation ever occur again. Major Rudolf Anderson remained the only combatant killed

during the standoff (although a further 18 personnel died in crashes and accidents) and his body was returned to the States and buried in South Carolina with full military honours.

While Castro was reasonably secure, neither the US nor the USSR came out of the Crisis covered in glory. Khrushchev remained in power in the Soviet Union for two more years, but his eventual ousting was directly attributable to the embarrassment he and his country had suffered in Cuba, and the Politburo's perception of him as having managed the situation ineptly.

Meanwhile, while the US publicly attempted to sell the outcome as a victory, it was also conflicted. US Air Force General Curtis Le

**CASTRO, WHO HAD NOT BEEN CONSULTED, WAS FURIOUS TO LEARN THE NEWS OF THE SOVIET WITHDRAWAL FROM THE RADIO**

## NUCLEAR STRIKES

Where might the Cuban missiles have landed?

**4,074KM  
(2,531MI)**

### TARGET: FLORIDA

Troops in South Florida were poised for action as the Crisis intensified. Local soldier Henry Mack recalls these 13 days as "the loneliest of his life", primed to launch a nuclear missile if any incoming aircraft failed to respond properly to a challenge. Thankfully, he never had to push the button!

**1,889KM  
(1,174MI)**

### TARGET: WASHINGTON DC

The political centre of the USA, Washington is home to both the White House and the Pentagon. A new exhibition of documents pertaining to the Crisis was opened in the city in 2012.

**1,167KM  
(725MI)**

GULF OF MEXICO

CUBA

### TARGET: TORONTO

The Cuban missiles could have reached Toronto, but Canada's role in the Cold War was often slightly different to the USA's. Several of its prime ministers advocated peacekeeping, diplomacy and support for non-NATO allied nations, rather than the USA's more intransigent stance.

### TARGET: NEW YORK

As an important financial and cultural hub, the missiles ringing New York for its defence at one time outnumbered Washington's. But as a site of left-wing counterculture, the weapons also drew protest. In Greenwich Village on the first night of the Crisis, Bob Dylan sang *You're Going To Miss Me When I'm Gone*.

PACIFIC OCEAN

ATLANTIC OCEAN



## IN THEIR OWN WORDS

The three leaders state their cases



"In our discussions and exchanges [...] the one thing that has most concerned me has been the possibility that your government would not correctly understand the will and determination of the United States

in any given situation, since I have not assumed that you or any other sane man would, in this nuclear age, deliberately plunge the world into war which it is crystal clear no country could win and which could only result in catastrophic consequences to the whole world."

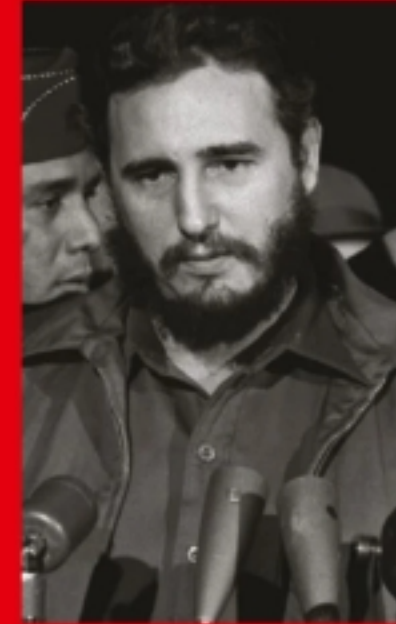
**KENNEDY TO KHRUSHCHEV,  
22 OCT 1962**



"You, Mr President, are not declaring a quarantine, but rather are setting forth an ultimatum and threatening that if we do not give in to your demands you will use force. Consider what you are saying! And you want to persuade me to agree to this! [...] You are no longer appealing to

reason, but wish to intimidate us."

**KHRUSHCHEV TO JFK,  
24 OCT 1962**



"The Soviet Union must never allow circumstances in which the imperialists could carry out a nuclear first strike against it. [If] the imperialists carry out an invasion of Cuba – a brutal act in violation of universal and moral law – then that would be the moment to

eliminate this danger forever, in an act of the most legitimate self-defence. However harsh and terrible the solution, there would be no other."

**CASTRO TO KHRUSHCHEV,  
26 OCT 1962**

■ EXCOMM meets to discuss tactics on 26 October 1962



May for example, although his was a minority opinion, called the Cuban Missile Crisis "the greatest defeat in [US] history." Le May had stridently argued for an invasion of Cuba from the earliest moments of the crisis, and continued to do so after the Russians' withdrawal. "We could have gotten not only the missiles out of Cuba, we could have gotten the Communists out of Cuba at that time," he was still railing 25 years later.

In the end, it was perhaps humanity itself that won the Cuban Missile Crisis, receiving in the process an urgent wake-up call that the balance of international power was being juggled between two super-states who had the capacity to annihilate one another at a moment's notice, likely taking everyone else with them. Conservative estimates suggest casualties of a nuclear war between the US and USSR would have numbered in the hundreds of millions.

**KHRUSHCHEV  
WAS SEEN AS  
HAVING BACKED  
AWAY FROM  
CIRCUMSTANCES  
HE HAD INITIATED  
IN THE FIRST  
PLACE**

Scarily enough, however, the famous Doomsday Clock, which provides a symbolic, visual representation in 'minutes to midnight' of how close the world is at any given time to a politically related global catastrophe, didn't move during the Crisis, since it happened faster than the clock's board could react. Immediately before the Crisis it stood at seven minutes to midnight, and afterward it moved back to 12, the world deemed a safer place for all, thanks to the treaty. Today,

the Doomsday Clock's hands stand at two minutes to midnight, 'thanks' to the lack of global action to reduce nuclear stockpiles, the potential for regional conflict, and the effects of avoidable climate change. The idea of mutually assured destruction may in modern times feel like an anachronism belonging firmly in the past. But some sources suggest it's closer than ever.



■ Nuclear missiles like this Jupiter rocket were placed in Turkey and Italy





# KEY PLAYER: CHE GUEVARA

FROM A CAREER IN MEDICINE TO THE FRONT LINE OF MARXIST POLITICS, ONE MAN FROM ARGENTINA WOULD BECOME A TIMELESS SYMBOL FOR REVOLUTION AND CHANGE

**E**rnesto Guevara was born on 14 June 1928, the eldest of five children in an Argentine family of Spanish and Irish descent. It was that Irish blood, his father would later remark, that made Guevara a restless and precocious character from an early age. Even in those youthful years, Guevara was a soul that railed against the norm, distancing himself from his middle-class upbringing as he adopted a greater affinity with Argentina's poorest citizens. By his teens, Guevara had already abandoned the leftist leanings of his mother and father as he began to openly oppose the regime of president Juan Perón and his restriction of civil liberties.

By 1950, having begun a career in medicine, Guevara decided to set out and see the state of his country for himself. Not being able to afford a proper motorbike, he bought a bicycle with a small engine attached and set out to see just how far poverty had spread under Perón's rule. Eventually, the young Argentinian arrived at San Francisco del Chañar, where his friend Alberto Granado ran the dispensary at a leper centre. The biochemist's work helping some of the sickest citizens of the nation inspired Guevara to follow his friend's footsteps and put his studies in medicine to practical use.

With Granado taking a year off his work in the leper colony, the two men decided to set out on a new expedition together in 1952. This second ten-month-long journey would serve as one of the turning points in Guevara's life, as he and Granado rode through Argentina, Chile, Peru, Ecuador, Colombia, Venezuela, Panama and even Miami astride a 1939 Norton 500cc motorcycle they named La Poderosa II ('The Mighty II'). Already possessing a deep love for poetry and prose, Guevara kept a journal of his long trip, and the widespread poverty and suffering he witnessed galvanised him to return home and complete his doctorate, but it also fostered another powerful hunger in him.

In 1953, having completed his studies, the call of the world saw Guevara set out yet again, his travels eventually bringing him to Guatemala. Now known by the affectionate moniker of 'Che' (meaning 'bro' or 'friend' in Spanish), Guevara was still in Guatemala when the leftist regime of its government was suddenly overthrown. The coup was backed by the United States through the CIA, and it was here that the Argentinian revolutionary began to see the US as an imperialist power happy to trade the dignity of another country's population in favour of power and money.

On 21 September 1954, Guevara arrived in Mexico City and began working in the General Hospital as an allergy consultant. While in Mexico, Guevara worked long and hard, driven by his desire to help the poor and the sick, and the desire to enact change. He even conducted lectures on medicine at the Faculty of Medicine in the National Autonomous University of Mexico and worked as a news photographer for Latina News Agency. By 1955, Guevara's charismatic nature had brought him to the attention of two Cuban revolutionaries living in exile: Fidel and Raúl Castro.

The Castros had fled Cuba as the regime of former president Fulgencio Batista descended into a brutal dictatorship, and with Guevara joining their cause, the trio gathered together a small guerrilla force and landed on Cuban soil on 2 December 1956. They had revolution in mind, the desire to overthrow Batista and free the people, but the reality was a force of less than 100 revolutionaries facing Batista's US-backed army. It was a massacre, with Guevara doing his best to treat the wounded and support his comrades in battle. Guevara and the Castros barely escaped with their lives, fleeing into the mountains as Batista began his hunt. The Cuban Revolution had begun.

As the campaign of guerrilla warfare against the Cuban government took hold, Guevara saw first hand just how much the common

man was suffering under Batista. Among the Sierra Maestra mountains he called home, he found no schools, health care or infrastructure – instead he found poverty and widespread illiteracy. Such a sight sickened the Argentinian revolutionary, and it galvanised his desire to see Cuba reborn anew. Guevara organised the building of factories and schools, helping teach men, women and children to read and write while setting up clinics to treat the sick and a newspaper to spread the word of the revolution.

As Fidel Castro's second in command, Guevara's passionate belief in the revolution made him a formidable leader. That passion led him to shoot traitors on site and send squads to hunt down revolutionaries who had gone AWOL. It made him a man to be feared and only served to bolster the cult of personality that continued to build around him like a gathering storm. While he enforced brutality as a commander, he also took as position as a figurehead for the revolution very seriously, often reading to troops during quieter moments or holding debates.

As the conflict raged on, Guevara continued to play a vital role. He helped set up the



■ Guevara is escorted through Red Square by an assortment of Soviet officials during a visit to Moscow in 1964

★  
**GUEVARA ORGANISED THE BUILDING OF  
FACTORIES AND SCHOOLS, HELPING TEACH  
MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN TO READ**  
★



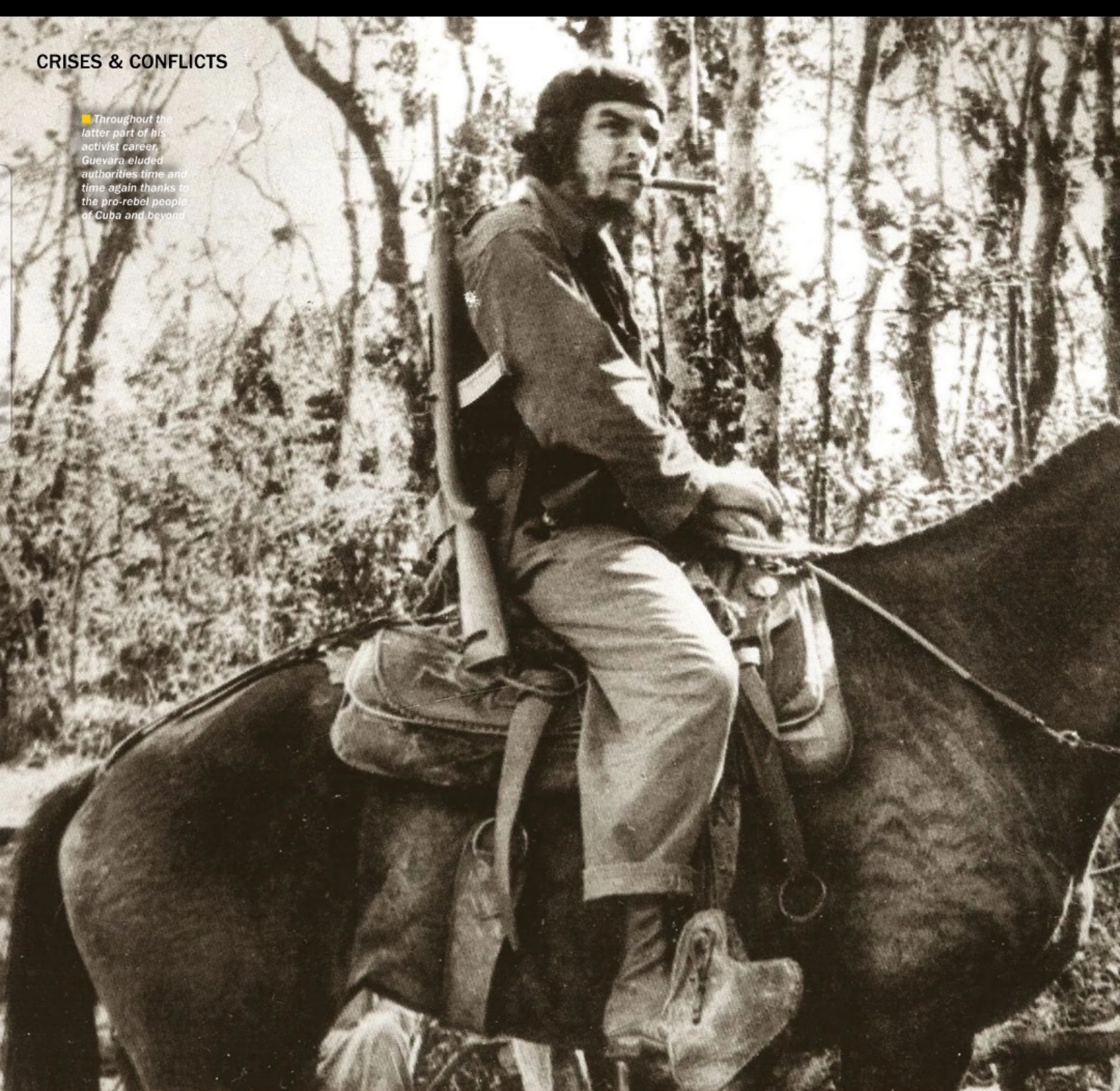
KEY PLAYER: CHE GUEVARA

■ This portrait of Guevara, much like the man himself, has become one of the most famous and iconic images of the 20th century





■ Throughout the latter part of his activist career, Guevara eluded authorities time and time again thanks to the pro-rebel people of Cuba and beyond



## THE MAKING OF A REVOLUTIONARY HERO

Guevara's travels through some of the poorest nations in the world shaped his desire for change

### 1950-52

#### The motorcycle odyssey

For more than two years, the young Guevara left a promising career in medicine behind to rediscover himself and his country on the back of a bicycle fitted with a motor. The first expedition in 1950 was a 4,500-kilometre solo trip through the rural provinces of northern Argentina, while the second saw him volunteering at the San Pablo leper colony in Peru.

### 1953-59

#### Cuban Revolution

While travelling through Mexico City, the already politically charged Guevara met up with Raúl and Fidel Castro, and agreed to join their plan to overthrow US-backed Cuban dictator Fulgencio Batista and rebuild Cuba as a socialist state for the people. The revolution that followed was a bloody one, but it cemented Guevara's status as a charismatic revolutionary.

### 1966-67

#### Revolutionary work in Bolivia

With the revolution in Cuba a success and the government rebuilt from the ground up with Castro at its head, Guevara still felt the desire to spread his passion for Marxism elsewhere. Soon after, he left to spread revolution in the Congo before moving onto Bolivia. He helped form a guerrilla force, but it was eventually wiped out and Guevara himself was executed.





■ Guevara's charismatic character and thirst for change took him across the world, including a trip to Egypt and the Gaza Strip in 1959

revolutionary sound of Rebel Radio in February 1958, broadcasting anti-Batista propaganda around the clock, and showed his prowess as a military tactician – his efforts in the Battle of Las Mercedes later that year proving particularly impressive as he stopped Batista's forces from hunting down Castro. That prowess would ultimately tip the war in their favour, with Guevara and his small band of revolutionaries fighting for control of Havana and the rest of the island at the Battle of Santa Clara. Despite being outnumbered ten-to-one, Guevara and his men refused to give in or give up and Batista was forced to flee.

In January 1959, Fidel Castro took control of the Cuban government and began installing a new pro-communist regime. Guevara was initially appointed as head of the La Cabaña prison, which quickly became infamous for the sheer number of prisoners that were executed under Guevara's personal extrajudicial orders. The brutality he had tempered in the war for Cuba's freedom refused to abate as Cuba was purged of hundreds of men and women who supported the old regime. Guevara also played a key role in the country's new land reforms, which began the long and arduous process of appropriating farm land and redistributing it among the peasantry.

As both president of the National Bank, and later as minister of industries, Guevara worked fervently with Castro to rebuild Cuba as a socialist utopia. On 12 June 1959, Castro used Guevara's charming personality to spread the word of Cuba's rebirth around the world, sending him on a three-month tour that took him from Egypt to Japan. Upon his return to Cuba, Guevara's power grew even more as he was appointed as finance minister. In this position, Guevara's steadfast belief in the tenets of Marxism saw him oversee huge

reforms, with everything from factories to education nationalised.

These reforms would lead the United States to boycott trade with Cuba, forcing Guevara to seek trade deals with the nations of the Eastern Bloc. It helped bolster the struggling Cuban economy, but it also accelerated tensions between the USA and Cuba into an all out crisis. One coalition between Cuba and West Germany paved the way for a US-backed counter-revolutionary invasion of the Bay of Pigs in April 1961, and while the attempt to destabilise Castro and Guevara failed, it did lead the Argentinian to orchestrate the Cuban-Soviet agreement. This partnership brought Soviet nuclear missiles a mere stone's throw from US soil and saw Guevara working at the heart of the most dangerous crisis of the Cold War: the Cuban Missile Crisis.

While the crisis would eventually fizzle out, the experience cemented Guevara's presence on the world stage and drew his attention to the plight of other struggles across the globe. For the next four years, Guevara resumed his ambassadorial role and visited countless nations, preaching the power of revolution. It relit a fire in him that had been dimmed by his political responsibilities back in Cuba, and by October 1965, Guevara had resigned all of his roles in government and decided to spread the spark of revolution elsewhere.

The Congo, which was in the grip of a civil war between rebels and the democratic government, was his first trip, the imperialism of its government proving a ripe battleground for Guevara's experience in guerrilla tactics and success in Cuba. However, the African continent proved a far different beast than Latin America. Despite his best efforts, his rebel troops were soon dwindling a year later and the Argentinian was forced to move on. Bolivia was his next port of call in 1966, but a similar fate lay in wait as his small force of guerrilla fighters were hunted down and exterminated by a far more organised Bolivian military. Even Guevara himself was eventually captured, his talent for disappearing into the wild finally running out. On 9 October 1967, Ernesto 'Che' Guevara was executed. The revolutionary's journey had finally come to an end.

★  
**THE BRUTALITY HE HAD TEMPERED IN  
THE WAR FOR CUBA'S FREEDOM REFUSED  
TO ABATE AS CUBA WAS PURGED**  
★



# A THIRD WORLD WAR

WITH THOUSANDS OF MEGATONS OF NUCLEAR EXPLOSIVES POINTED AT EACH OTHER'S CITIES, THE SUPERPOWERS CHOSE TO FIGHT EACH OTHER THROUGH PROXY CONFLICTS IN THE DEVELOPING WORLD

**T**he atomic blasts at Hiroshima and Nagasaki ushered in a new global order in which total war was no longer an option for the West or its communist opponents. As early as the 1950s, the competing superpowers realised that a direct war along the lines of 1914-18 or 1939-45 was unlikely to be fought with conventional forces for very long and even a 'limited' war would result in whole sections of their respective populations being wiped out.

Thus much of the Cold War was 'outsourced' to various conflict zones in the Third World. Typically, a given African, Asian or Latin American nation would pledge ideological allegiance to either the Western or communist camp. Soon, money, weaponry or technical advisers would be forthcoming from either Washington or Moscow. If the regime was facing an armed insurgency, rebel factions could likewise pledge loyalty to the other side and expect similar backing. In many ways, however, this was an oversimplification of how the Cold War impacted the Third World. Many of the wars in the developing world during 1947-89 took place against a backdrop of rapid decolonisation and were motivated by socio-economic and ethnic tensions that far predated the Cold War.

Moreover, the Kremlin and Pentagon, in theory committed to promoting liberal democracy or socialism at an international level, often found themselves backing regimes that were travesties. The appalling human rights records of many of Washington's anti-communist allies attracted much political and media criticism throughout the West. Nor were the newly emergent nations of Africa and Asia always passive accomplices in a proxy war between the superpowers. The 1955 Bandung Conference in Indonesia led to the foundation of the Non-Aligned Movement in 1961 whose member states sought a middle-way foreign policy between the priorities of the competing superpowers. Finally, although the Cold War is now history, it has left a devastating legacy in many of its erstwhile battlefields. Landmines, political instability, transnational crime and terrorism are among the legacies of several decades of ideological rivalry in the Third World.



★  
**MUCH OF THE COLD WAR  
WAS OUTSOURCED TO  
VARIOUS CONFLICT ZONES  
IN THE THIRD WORLD**  
★



## AFRICA

■ Dr Jonas Savimbi, leader of the Unita movement in Angola, delivers a speech to his troops

## ANGOLAN CIVIL WAR

**DATES:** NOVEMBER 1975 - APRIL 2002

**COMBATANTS:** MPLA, AND FNLA FACTIONS WITH ASSISTANCE FROM SWAPO, ANC ARMED WING, CUBA, EAST GERMANY AND USSR (COMMUNIST) VERSUS UNITA WITH ASSISTANCE FROM SOUTH AFRICA AND ZAIRE (ANTI-COMMUNIST)

**CASUALTIES:** ESTIMATED 500,000 CIVILIANS

**RESULTS:** CONTINUED RULE BY THE MPLA

Long after other European countries relinquished their territories to a new generation of black nationalists, the Portuguese hung on to their African colonies. That changed with the military coup in Lisbon on 25 April 1974, whose leaders promised a rapid programme of decolonisation. With the signing of the Alvor Accord in January 1975 that granted independence, three major parties emerged: the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA), the National Front for the Liberation of Angola (FNLA) and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA). By mid-1975, the three factions were fighting for territory. Backed by Soviet aid and Cuban troops, the MPLA fought its way to controlling most Angolan territory within months.

Weaponry, intelligence and even mercenaries were channelled indirectly to UNITA, most of it from the United States, South Africa and Brazil. By 1991, a temporary agreement called the Bicesse Accords was reached, allowing for a ceasefire and the demobilisation of guerrilla factions. The MPLA candidate Jose dos Santos subsequently won Angola's first multi-party election, but when the UNITA leader Dr Jonas Savimbi disputed the result, civil war resumed. Rich in oil and diamonds, Angola was nonetheless in ruins by the time of Savimbi's death in an ambush in 2002.

## OTHER AFRICAN CONFLICTS

## MOZAMBIQUE: 1977-92

**Casualties:** 1 million dead including those from famine  
Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO) versus Rhodesian and South African-backed Mozambique Resistance Movement (RENAMO).

## CONGO CRISIS: 1960-65

**Casualties:** 100,000 dead

Popular Nationalist regime opposed by various separatist rebellions backed by the United States and Soviet Union; United Nations intervention eventually established the rule of Joseph Désiré Mobutu.

## THE OGADEN WAR

**DATES:** JULY 1977 - MARCH 1978

**COMBATANTS:** ETHIOPIAN ARMY ASSISTED BY CUBA, USSR AND SOUTH YEMEN VERSUS SOMALIA ARMY AND WEST SOMALIA LIBERATION FRONT

**CASUALTIES:** 13,000 MILITARY PLUS 1,000 CIVILIANS APPROX.

**RESULTS:** ETHIOPIAN VICTORY PLUS MOVE BY SOMALIA AWAY FROM COMMUNIST CAMP

Ethiopia's Emperor Haile Selassie had been overthrown in a bloody coup by the Derg (military council) in September 1974. Now ruled by the avowed Marxist Mengistu Haile Mariam, the country was plagued by internal chaos, particularly in the majority Somali Ogaden province.

In June 1977, Ethiopia accused the Somali military of infiltrating Ogaden and assisting the West Somali Liberation Front (WSLF). The following month, an invasion force

struck deep in Ogaden and took most of the province. The Soviet Union, confronted by two Marxist allies at war, attempted to mediate a ceasefire then abandoned the Somali regime of Said Barre altogether. Soviet military advisers and 15,000 Cuban combat troops journeyed to Ethiopia in 1977-78. The Somali Army and WSLF had success on the ground but, by early-1978, Ethiopian counter-attacks pushed them out of Ogaden. Barre then aligned with the USA.

## WAR FOR ZIMBABWE

**DATES:** JULY 1964 - DECEMBER 1979

**COMBATANTS:** RHODESIAN SECURITY FORCES VERSUS ZANLA AND ZIPRA GUERRILLAS

**CASUALTIES:** 11,000 ESTIMATED INSURGENTS AND SECURITY FORCES, 8,258 CIVILIANS

**RESULTS:** END OF WHITE MINORITY RULE, INDEPENDENT ZIMBABWE

Shortly before the Ian Smith-led white regime made its Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Britain on 11 November 1966, Rhodesia endured its first insurgent attacks. The two major leaders to emerge were Joshua Nkomo, founder of the Zimbabwe Action Party (ZAPU), a Marxist-Leninist party, and Robert Mugabe, who formed the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) in August 1963. Both parties had military wings that received training from both North Korea and China. By 1971, black nationalists had formed a coalition to topple Smith's regime. With the withdrawal of the Portuguese from Mozambique in 1975, Smith declared a state of emergency as Rhodesia now shared borders with three hostile nations.

Under international embargo since 1966, the Rhodesian regime nonetheless prosecuted a 'bush war' characterised by terrible cruelty on both sides. In 1976, Rhodesian Selous Scouts crossed the 800-mile Mozambique frontier and destroyed a rebel camp, killing hundreds of trainees. They also crossed into Zambia after Nkomo's guerrillas shot down two Vickers Viscount airliners with Soviet-supplied SAM-7 heat-seeking missiles.

By the late-1970s, as the conflict intensified, all sides were under international pressure to end the

conflict. The Lancaster House Agreement of 1979 provided for an independent Zimbabwe. Within a few years Mugabe had effectively created a one-party state and sidelined Nkomo. He continues to rule despite increased international condemnation of his human rights record.

■ A young member of Robert Mugabe's ZANLA group - the military wing of his nationalist faction - struggles to contain his emotions as he leans against his rifle





# ASIA

## INDONESIAN MILITARY TAKEOVER

**DATES:** OCTOBER 1965 - MID-1966

**COMBATANTS:** INDONESIAN MILITARY AND ANTI-COMMUNIST MILITIAS, ISLAMIC GROUPS, SOME COMMUNIST REPRISALS

**CASUALTIES:** ESTIMATED 500,000 TO 1 MILLION CIVILIANS

**RESULTS:** FALL OF PRESIDENT SUKARNO, BEGINNING OF MILITARY REIGN OF SUHARTO

An archipelago of over 13,000 islands straddling the equator, Indonesia had been colonised by the Dutch, then fought over by the Allies and Japanese in World War II.

In the 1950s, the flamboyant, populist but unstable Dr Ahmed Sukarno presided over a vast, impoverished and factious nation. He won elections in 1955 then cancelled the parliamentary system in favour of "guided democracy". His economic mismanagement led to hyper-inflation across Indonesia while his foreign policy involved extracting massive aid from the Western and communist powers while switching sides on a whim. Sukarno conceived a 'Greater Indonesia,' encompassing the entire Malay-speaking region and his policy of Konfrontasi (Confrontation) with newly independent Malaysia resulted in clashes between Commonwealth troops and Indonesian special forces in the jungles of Borneo in 1963-66.

Sukarno's ideology was a blend of nationalism, socialism and Javanese mysticism but his power base was an unsteady balance between the right-wing Indonesian Army led by General Mohammed Suharto and the Partai Komunisasi Indonesia (PKI) led by DN Aidit. The PKI was the world's third



■ Indonesia's left-leaning nationalist premier Dr Sukarno exchanges a warm greeting with Soviet leader Nikita Khrushchev in 1961

largest communist party in 1965, many of Sukarno's ministers sympathetic to its push for nationalisation of industry and closer links with China.

On 1 October 1965, the Indonesian Army declared that it had foiled a PKI coup attempt against Sukarno. Whether this was actually the case has never been verified. Most of the key witnesses in the ensuing purge were killed, most notably DN Aidit. General Suharto's forces and associated vigilantes went on the rampage across Indonesia during 1965-66, killing at least 500,000 suspected communists. American and British intelligence, the latter based in Singapore, provided intelligence on targeted individuals. By 1968, Sukarno had resigned and the militarist Orde Baru (new Order) established by Suharto would last another three decades.

## BANGLADESH WAR OF LIBERATION

**DATES:** MARCH - DECEMBER 1971

**COMBATANTS:** PAKISTAN MILITARY PLUS ISLAMIC PARAMILITARIES VERSUS MUKTI BAHINI INSURGENTS; AFTER DECEMBER, INDIAN AND PAKISTAN ARMIES

**CASUALTIES:** ESTIMATED 1-2 MILLION BENGALI CIVILIANS

**RESULTS:** INDEPENDENT BANGLADESH

The partition of the subcontinent in 1947 created a Hindu India enclosed between a West and East Pakistan that, Islam aside, had virtually nothing in common with each other. The Bengali-speaking peoples of the East resented the discrimination they faced from the Islamabad military regime during the 1960s.

However, Pakistan's generals were regarded by Washington as vital regional allies in South Asia. Following the junta's callous and inept

response to the catastrophic Bengali cyclone of 1970, nationalism in East Pakistan crystallised around the charismatic Sheikh Mujibur Rahman, leader of the Awami League.

But by April 1971, full-scale civil war was under way. The West Pakistan military sealed off the East and began a savage crackdown, slaughtering tens of thousands of Bengalis. Mutinying East Pakistan soldiers and rural guerrillas called mukti bahini fought back while millions of refugees poured into western India.

India's Prime Minister Indira Gandhi favoured a socialist economic strategy and strong relations with the Soviet Union. Inevitably, when India and Pakistan went to war on 3 December 1971, there was consternation in Washington. National Security Advisor Henry Kissinger urged President Nixon to "tilt the balance" in Pakistan's favour. Nixon ordered US warships to the Bay of Bengal that month. In the event, Pakistan's forces were routed by the Indians within a fortnight. East Pakistan broke away as Bangladesh immediately thereafter.

■ Local 'mukti bahini' guerillas run weapons drills in occupied East Pakistan, 1971





## VIETNAM-CAMBODIA WAR

**DATES:** MAY 1975 - OCTOBER 1991

**COMBATANTS:** VIETNAMESE ARMY PLUS KAMPUCHEAN ARMED FORCES VERSUS KHMER ROUGE, KPNLF AND FUNCINPEC INSURGENTS

**CASUALTIES:** 25,000 VIETNAMESE AND KAMPUCHEAN TROOPS, APPROX 50,000 INSURGENT GROUPS AND 100,000 CIVILIANS NOT INCLUDING KHMER ROUGE MASSACRES AND FAMINE OF 1979-80

**RESULTS:** VIETNAMESE MILITARY WITHDRAWAL AND PARIS PEACE

**AGREEMENT:** UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN CAMBODIA IN EARLY 1990S

After the USA's retreat from Indo-China in April-May 1975, the region became the setting for a Cold War within a Cold War, pitting the nominal communist allies of China and the Soviet Union against each other. The new communist regimes in Vietnam and Cambodia clashed over disputed land and maritime territories. After a brief island war in the Gulf of Thailand in mid-1975, an uneasy peace prevailed.

But by April 1977, the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge regime in Kampuchea (Cambodia) launched attacks on Soviet-aligned Vietnam. In addition to trying to create a peasant utopia through mass repression, they coveted a region of southern Vietnam ruled by the Khmers centuries before.

In December 1978, Vietnam retaliated with 150,000 troops and occupied Cambodia,



■ Democratic Kampuchea  
Prime Minister Pol Pot,  
pictured circa 1977

installing a client regime. Over 600,000 Cambodians fled to border camps on the Thai border. These also provided a sanctuary for anti-Vietnamese rebels during the 1980s: the Khmer Rouge allied with the Khmer Peoples' National Liberation Front and the Front United National pour un Cambodge Indépendant Neutre Pacifique et Coopératif (FUNCINPEC) and received money, weapons and training from China, Thailand and the USA. In 1989, Vietnam withdrew its troops.

After peace talks in Indonesia, the 1991 Paris Peace Agreement laid the groundwork for a massive UN-mission and the theoretical disarmament of the factions. But the Khmer Rouge continued their attacks and kidnappings until well into the late 1990s. In 1997, Prime Minister Hun Sen, an ex-Khmer Rouge commander who had defected to Vietnam in 1977, staged a coup and has ruled Cambodia ever since.

## MALAYAN COMMUNIST INSURGENCY

**DATES:** JUNE 1948 - JULY 1960

**COMBATANTS:** COMMONWEALTH AND MALAYAN SECURITY FORCES VERSUS MALAYAN COMMUNIST PARTY

**CASUALTIES:** 519 DEAD FROM THE BRITISH FORCES, 1,346 FROM THE MALAYAN SECURITY FORCES, 6,170 COMMUNIST FORCES, APPROX 3,000 CIVILIANS

**RESULTS:** DEFEAT AND EXPULSION OF COMMUNIST INSURGENTS; INDEPENDENT FEDERATION OF MALAYA CREATED

In the aftermath of World War II, there was much discontent among Malaya's impoverished Chinese minority who made up ten per cent of the population and who gravitated towards the Malayan Communist Party (MCP) whose leader, Chen Peng, had actually been trained by British forces and fought behind Japanese lines during the war. He was attracted to the strategy of a 'people's war' pioneered by Mao's communists in China and formed the Malay Races Liberation Army (MRLA) as its armed wing.

On 18 June 1948, after three European estate managers were murdered in the northern state of Perak, new emergency laws were enacted. The MRLA was supported largely by the ethnic Chinese and they established a network of jungle bases from where they would attack plantations and infrastructure. The British Director of Operations in Malaya, General Sir Harold Briggs, responded with the 'Briggs Plan,' which involved creating fortified 'New Villages' into which Chinese civilians

were resettled. By 1952, with Lieutenant General Gerald Templer in command, large numbers of Commonwealth troops were stationed in Malaya, including the King's African Rifles and Gurkha battalions. Other elements of the counter-insurgency included a rural hearts and minds campaign, and after 1955, an amnesty was

offered to surrendered guerrillas. By 1957, the independent Federation of Malaya insurgency established, robbing the communists of their claim to be fighting an anti-colonial campaign. Chin Peng and his forces later fled to southern Thailand but fought a second insurgency against Malaysia in 1968-89.



■ Commonwealth officers discuss the tracking of communist insurgents in Malaya

## OTHER ASIAN CONFLICTS

**LAOTIAN CIVIL WAR: 1953-75**

**Casualties: 70,000**

Royal Lao Government opposed by North Vietnamese-backed Pathet Lao militia; CIA backed Hmong and other hill tribes to fight communist forces.

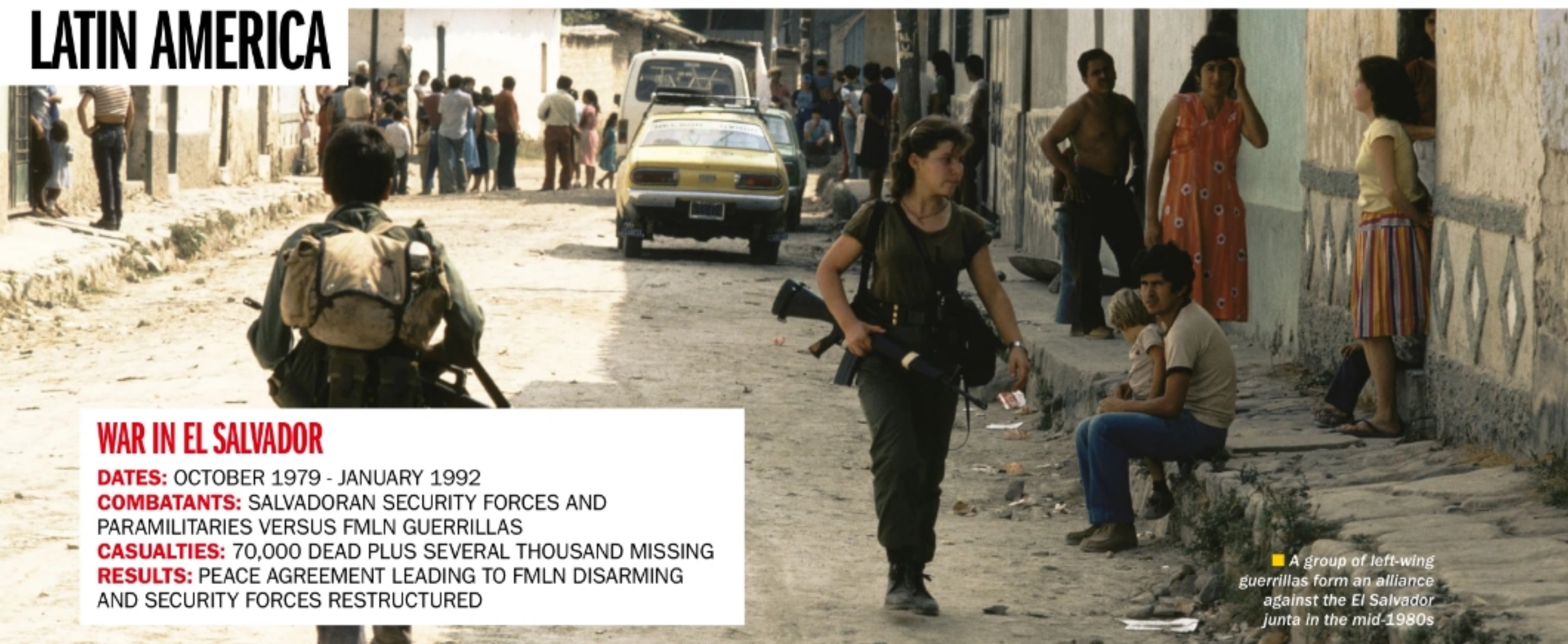
**COMMUNIST INSURGENCY IN THE PHILIPPINES: 1969-PRESENT**

**Casualties: 40,000**

US-supported Philippine government opposed by Communist Party of the Philippines and New Peoples' Army.



# LATIN AMERICA



## WAR IN EL SALVADOR

**DATES:** OCTOBER 1979 - JANUARY 1992

**COMBATANTS:** SALVADORAN SECURITY FORCES AND PARAMILITARIES VERSUS FMLN GUERRILLAS

**CASUALTIES:** 70,000 DEAD PLUS SEVERAL THOUSAND MISSING

**RESULTS:** PEACE AGREEMENT LEADING TO FMLN DISARMING AND SECURITY FORCES RESTRUCTURED

■ A group of left-wing guerrillas form an alliance against the El Salvador junta in the mid-1980s

A small elite had controlled El Salvador since the 1930s, backed by military repression. 40 years later, the regime was close to toppling. By October 1979, the reformist Revolutionary Government Junta was in power but opposed by right-wing army officers. Their leader Roberto D'Aubuisson, also known as 'Blowtorch Bob', was accused of masterminding the 1980 assassination of Archbishop Oscar Romero, a critic of the regime.

That year, five left-wing factions came together as the Farabundo Marti National Liberation Front (FMLN) to fight the junta. When five American church women were raped and murdered by the military and their death squad allies, President

Jimmy Carter suspended aid to the junta. However, his Republican successor Ronald Reagan considered the regime a key ally in Central America: after FMLN's 1981 offensive, his administration allotted substantial aid to the junta.

Much of this went to specialist units in the Salvadoran military, most notoriously the Atlacatl Brigade, responsible for massacring nearly 900 civilians in the village of El Mozote in 1981. In 1984, Jose Napoleon Duarte became El Salvador's first elected leader in 50 years, but he was soon replaced by a candidate from the Nationalist Republican Alliance party (ARENA), the right-wing party set up by D'Aubuisson in

1980. After a decade of massacres, bombings and assassinations, the conflict was stalemated. The collapse of the Eastern Bloc removed much of the FMLN's support, but when the Atlacatl Brigade murdered six Jesuits in November 1989, Washington came under increased pressure to end the conflict, particularly since most of the Jesuits' killers had been trained at the US Army School of the Americas at Fort Benning, Georgia.

After 20 months of negotiations, the UN-brokered Chapultepee Peace Accords in Mexico City finally brought an end to the civil war. The FMLN has since transitioned and evolved into a mainstream political party.

## NICARAGUAN REVOLUTION

**DATES:** JULY 1979 - FEBRUARY 1990

**COMBATANTS:** SANDINISTA NATIONAL REVOLUTIONARY FRONT VERSUS ANTI-COMMUNIST CONTRA REBELS

**CASUALTIES:** 30,000 DEAD APPROX

**RESULTS:** ELECTORAL DEFEAT OF SANDINISTAS UNDER DANIEL ORTEGA AND DISARMING OF CONTRAS

In the early-20th century, the US Marines had occupied Nicaragua. After the defeat of the left-wing revolutionary Augusto Sandino and the withdrawal of the US forces, Anastasio Somoza had seized power in a coup and established a dynasty that would rule for decades, their hold maintained by the US-trained National Guard.

The martyred Sandino was the inspiration for the Sandinista National Liberation Front that sought to topple the regime and lessen US influence in Nicaragua.

By the late-1970s, the Sandinistas, capitalising on widespread rural poverty and the brutal rule of the Somoza dynasty, were able to launch audacious attacks in the capital of Managua.

The Organisation of American States called on Anastasio Somoza Debayle to resign. By the time he fled to exile and the Sandinistas took power on 19 July 1979, over 50,000 Nicaraguans had been killed.

The new regime set up a junta and a broad-based cabinet including non-Sandinistas, establishing a legislature ahead of elections. The Sandinistas also pursued medical and literacy programs on the Cuban model. The Reagan administration was particularly hostile to the Sandinista regime and began funnelling weapons to anti-communist guerrillas known as 'Contras'. These were based outside of Nicaragua, particularly in Honduras, and consisted of ex-National Guard soldiers and right-wing opponents of the regime. In 1986, the Iran-Contra scandal, whereby senior officials in the

Reagan administration were found guilty of illegal arms sales to fund the Contras, resulted in the Boland Amendment, limiting US military aid.

The Sandinistas won an electoral landslide in 1984 but, within a few years, the economy was enfeebled by hyper-inflation while relations with the Catholic Church began to decline. By early-1989, Central American leaders agreed on a peace plan to end the conflict. 14 opposition parties banded together as the National Opposition Union (UNO). In the February 1990 Presidential election, the UNO candidate Violeta Barrios de Chamorro, whose journalist husband had been murdered under the Somoza regime, won against the Sandinista leader Daniel Ortega.



■ Anti-Sandinista guerrillas on the march in rural Nicaragua



## US TROOPS ENTER GRENADA

**DATES:** OCTOBER - DECEMBER 1983

**COMBATANTS:** PEOPLE'S REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF GRENADA AND CUBAN FORCES VERSUS UNITED STATES MILITARY AND CARIBBEAN ALLIES

**CASUALTIES:** 19 DEAD FROM THE UNITED STATES, 25 DEAD FROM CUBA, 45 DEAD FROM GRENADA AND 24 CIVILIANS

**RESULTS:** REGIME OVERTHROWN; INTERIM ADMINISTRATION AND ELECTIONS WON BY GRENADA NATIONAL PARTY

Grenada was a little-known Caribbean island until 25 October 1983, when it became the United States military's first theatre of operations since the end of the Vietnam War almost eight years earlier.

In March 1979, the People's Revolutionary Government seized power under Maurice Bishop and began aligning with Cuba to Washington's chagrin. He soon clashed with his military, and in October 1983, Bishop and 13 others were assassinated on the orders of his hard-line deputy, Bernard Coard.

At the time of the US invasion, codenamed 'Urgent Fury', several hundred American nationals were in Grenada, most of them medical students. Their safety and increasing Cuban influence supposedly provided the pretext for the invasion. That 220 American troops had been killed in a devastating truck bombing on a Beirut barracks days before has been cited as reason for the Reagan administration trying to save face in Grenada. However, evidence suggests the invasion was long planned.

On the morning of the invasion, 6,000 US troops, along with 300 soldiers from allied Caribbean nations, descended on Grenada's Pears Airport. They encountered unexpectedly heavy anti-aircraft fire and clashed with Cuban soldiers and construction workers building a controversial airstrip. The invasion ended within two days. Bernard Coard and a dozen others were tried for Bishop's murder and sentenced to death – a penalty that was later commuted to life imprisonment.

■ A Soviet-issued stamp depicting the leader of Grenada, Maurice Bishop



## COUP IN CHILE

**DATES:** 11 SEPTEMBER 1973

**COMBATANTS:** POPULAR UNITY GOVERNMENT, REVOLUTIONARY LEFT MOVEMENT VERSUS CHILEAN ARMED FORCES

**CASUALTIES:** 162 SECURITY FORCES AT THREE MONTHS, SEVERAL HUNDRED CIVILIANS AT THREE MONTHS

**RESULTS:** OVERTHROW OF POPULAR UNITY GOVERNMENT, GENERAL PINOCHET IN POWER UNTIL 1990

The politics of Chile swung towards a socialist program in 1970 when Salvador Allende (1908-73) was successful in his fourth attempt to win the presidency of the country. A former minister of health, Allende took power at a time of high unemployment in the nation and when half of Chile's children were undernourished.

His Popular Unity government increased wages, froze prices and enacted health and literacy programmes.

But the regime also established ties with Cuba and the Soviet Union. A programme of nationalisation included the expropriation of US-owned copper mines without compensation. Richard Nixon's administration unleashed economic war against Chile, restricting access to international credit.

Allende was popular with the urban and rural poor but opposed by the middle classes, military and a conservative Congress. The economy began to stagnate and on 11 September 1973, General Augusto Pinochet staged a coup d'état. Allende, barricaded into Santiago's Presidential Palace and under attack from the Chilean Airforce, committed suicide. Immediately after the coup, tens of thousands of civilians were rounded up in Santiago's National Stadium for interrogation, many vanishing soon afterwards. Pinochet ruled for the next 17 years, during which time up to 3,000 Chileans were killed and hundreds more disappeared. It later emerged that the CIA had set up an operation called 'Track II' in 1970-73 specifically designed to cultivate army officers who would stage a coup against Allende.

## OTHER LATIN AMERICAN CONFLICTS

**PERUVIAN INSURGENCY: 1980-PRESENT**

**Casualties: 69,000**

US-supported Peruvian governments opposed by Marxist-Maoist Shining Path (ongoing) and Tupac Amaru Revolutionary Movement (1982-97).

**GUATEMALAN CIVIL WAR: 1960-96**

**Casualties: 150,000 approx**

US-supported junta and military backed paramilitaries opposed by left-wing insurgents supported by indigenous peasantry.



■ A tank rolls down the streets of Santiago during the American-back military takeover in 1973



# THE SINO-SOVIET SPLIT

WHILE EVERYONE FOCUSED ON THE POWER STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE USSR, AN EVEN MORE BITTER CONFLICT WAS PLAYING OUT BETWEEN THE USSR AND CHINA...

**O**n 2 March 1969, the Strategic Missile Forces went to high alert – their nuclear warheads ready to be loosed at targets 1,600 kilometres (1,000 miles) away in less than 15 minutes.

On the banks of a frozen river, opposing soldiers of two nuclear powers bled to death in the snow, as a cold war that Kennedy didn't fight and Reagan wouldn't win turned hot.

This wasn't East versus West; this was East versus Far East – a murderous mirror image of the standoff between communism and capitalism. This was the other cold war.

In the red corner, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics at the height of its military expansion under the iron fist of the repressive Leonid Brezhnev. In the other red corner, the People's Republic of China, in the grip of a cultural revolution that had purged independent thinkers to replace them with a fanatical devotion to the unpredictable Mao Zedong.

On 2 March 1969, under what CIA analysts believed were direct orders from Mao's government in Beijing, Chinese border guards and soldiers of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) ambushed a unit of Soviet KGB border troops. Appearing unarmed, the Chinese threw aside their winter coats and gunned seven of them down at close range on the disputed Zhenbao/Damansky Island in the frozen Ussuri River where Chinese Manchuria meets the Soviet far east. Instantly, around 300 more PLA soldiers burst out of foxholes and opened fire on the remaining Soviets.

This brutal clash was the escalation of a 'pushing war' in which Soviet and Chinese soldiers had patrolled the same contested stretch of tundra, shouting and shoving each other for years. Mao's gambit was that either the Soviets wouldn't retaliate, or would do so at a small scale, despite the huge buildup of Red Army might in the region.

He was right: the response was small, but coming from a foe considerably better armed, it was still a crushing and humbling defeat. The KGB's elite border guards equipped with snow camouflage embedded themselves on the island, cutting down a Chinese detachment with a rattle of automatic fire in a bloody counter-ambush, while state-of-the-art T-62 medium tanks and devastating BM-21 Grad rocket artillery were brought up, quickly resulting in what CIA reports described as 'several hundred' Chinese casualties.

The Chinese began to dig in for further conflict, while the Soviets armed their warheads and issued threats, and this bitter clash for ownership of a single waterway and a handful

of rocky islands threatened to enter an even more dramatic and deadly phase.

Eventually though, Mao backed down and diplomatic negotiations over the territory resumed. He was ready for a land invasion, and perhaps even prepared for a nuclear strike, but he wasn't about to see his fledgling nuclear programme – the key to China's status as a world power – wiped out.

Flying back from the funeral of Vietnamese communist leader Ho Chi Minh in Hanoi, the Soviet prime minister, Alexei Kosygin, stopped in Beijing for talks with his Chinese counterpart, Zhou Enlai. Mao refused to attend, and the meeting that brought the Sino-Soviet Border War to an end was held in Beijing Airport. The relationship was normalised, but it certainly wasn't normal – in fact, it never had been; this first bloody-knuckled drag-'em-out between two of the most volatile superpowers is stark evidence of just how real the danger of nuclear escalation was.

The emphasis that Beijing placed on protecting its infant nuclear status is the real signifier that the Sino-Soviet Border Conflict was much more in political terms than just a tussle for strategically inconsequential strips of land on the fringes of both their vast empires. In fact, China had happily ceded similar-sized territory in earlier treaties with Mongolia and Burma. In demanding the revision of the 'unequal' treaties bullied out of the Chinese Qing Dynasty by Tsarist Russia in 1858 and 1860, what Mao really wanted was to force the great bear to take a step back and make some concession, ending China's junior status in the communist world. His tactic was simple; he hectored and needled, denouncing 'Soviet Imperialism' openly, while his forces maintained constant probing patrols into the territory claimed by the Soviets.

The violent deterioration of the relationship between China and the USSR came as a shock to the West. The entire foreign policy of the

■ Soviet special forces, or Spetsnaz, in Afghanistan in 1987, from the collection of E Kuvakin



★  
**THE CHINESE BEGAN TO DIG IN FOR FURTHER CONFLICT, WHILE THE SOVIETS ARMED THEIR WARHEADS AND ISSUED THREATS**  
★



■ A 1950 propaganda poster depicts a cordial relationship between Stalin and Mao. The reality was quite different





# GLOBAL FLASHPOINTS

## KEY

How involved was each power in world conflict?

### CHINA



Loans & aid



Ground war



Arms & training



Proxy war

### USSR



## ANGOLAN WAR OF INDEPENDENCE (1961-1974)

The Soviets backed the Marxist MPLA in the war for Angola's independence from Portugal, swiftly transforming them into the largest resistance movement. China, meanwhile, backed the centre-right FNLA, before switching allegiance to the more centrist UNITA as independence gave way to civil war.

## RHODESIAN BUSH WAR (1964-1979)

During the last gasp of white European colonial rule in what is now Zimbabwe, both China and the USSR supported rival left-wing liberation movements: China backing Robert Mugabe's Maoist-influenced ZANLA, and the Soviets supporting the Marxist-Leninist ZIPRA.

## MOZAMBIKAN CIVIL WAR (1977-1992)

Though both parties supported the Marxist FRELIMO at the beginning of Mozambique's independence war with Portugal, the USSR was the rebel group's primary donor and they loyally nuzzled the hand that fed during the Sino-Soviet Split.

## ETHIO-SOMALI WAR (1977-1978)

This land-war between Ethiopia and Somalia over the disputed Ogaden region turned especially complex as the USSR was initially backing both parties – both left-wing – with arms, aid and training. Failing to mediate a ceasefire, the Soviets began to more actively support Ethiopia, who were struggling to hold back their neighbour. The US, meanwhile, abandoned Ethiopia – ruled by a Marxist-Leninist junta – and threw its support firmly behind Somalia – a single-party socialist state – and China also threw in token aid.



US fixated on the idea of the 'domino effect' of communism and newly 'reddened' republics all lining up to point their armies at Uncle Sam. Despite the rhetoric that invoked ancient emperors and 19th-century misdeeds, this was only partly an ancient grudge match. Under the rosy propaganda of one unified socialist brotherhood linking arms for a better tomorrow was a very real strain that had been mounting for decades.

In the Chinese Civil War from 1927 to 1950, Soviet aid and advisors interfered in the running of the communist cause. Mao blamed several failures on Soviet influence – eg their insistence on tactics that worked in industrialised Russia during their own revolution, but which wouldn't work for the Chinese communists whose support came from rural peasantry, and also for

treating the Soviet-trained CPC party grandees as more important than the leaders in the field like himself.

Mao claimed in a 1956 conversation with the Soviet ambassador PF Yudin that these failed urban uprisings in the 1920s and early-1930s had cost the communist forces dearly, reducing its numbers from 300,000 to 25,000. When the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in 1931 transformed into the bloody assault on the rest of China in 1937, Soviet leader Joseph Stalin encouraged Mao to form a united front with his enemy – the nationalist Kuomintang commanded by Chiang Kai-shek. More galling for Mao, Stalin then signed a treaty of friendship with the Kuomintang and treated the generalissimo as the sole representative of China. Japanese weapons captured by the



**SINO-VIETNAMESE WAR (1979)**

Following the Vietnamese overthrow of the Chinese-backed Khmer Rouge in Cambodia and the threat of Vietnam's perceived Soviet influence, Chinese troops invaded about 20km (12mi) into Vietnam, withdrawing three weeks later.

**CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE WAR (1977-1989)**

Despite similar roots, the Chinese-backed Cambodian Khmer Rouge attacked the Soviet-backed Vietnamese over fears they were planning to dominate the region. Each nation's close links to rival communist powers caused both Vietnam and Cambodia to eye the other suspiciously and the Vietnamese installed a pro-Vietnamese regime in Cambodia – much to the fury of China.

**SINO-INDIAN WAR (1962)**

While Mao contested his border with the USSR, he was drawn into a similar confrontation with India. Khrushchev publicly condemned the Chinese and supplied weapons to India.

**SOVIET WAR IN AFGHANISTAN (1979-1989)**

With Chinese-Afghan relations soured by the rise of the Moscow-backed Afghan communists in 1978 and the subsequent Soviet invasion to keep them in power – the Chinese, along with Pakistani intelligence services and CIA advisors, trained and armed the Islamic mujahideen resistance.

**VIETNAM WAR (1955-1975)**

Chinese support came early from Mao and Chinese troops protected the North despite heavy American bombing. Soviet support came later, with an estimated 3,000 personnel on the ground and, by the end of the Sixties, over 75 per cent of Vietnam's military equipment came from the USSR.

## WHAT MAO WANTED WAS TO FORCE THE GREAT BEAR TO STEP BACK

Soviets were divided out to both the CPC and the Kuomintang in 1945 and 1946, but the nationalists ended up with twice as many rifles and six times as many machine guns. The eventual CPC victory and the rise of Mao as leader of the People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949 did lead to full Soviet recognition, albeit four months after the event. The Sino-Soviet Treaty of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance, signed in February 1950, was the subject of much alarm in Washington and braying propaganda from all sides, but this concealed bitter negotiations in which Mao fought off attempts to cede more Chinese territory to the USSR.

"The very room where the talks were held was like a stage where a demonic show was being acted out," recalled Stalin's interpreter

NT Fedorenko in 1989. "When Stalin walked in, everyone seemed to stop breathing, to freeze." From the outside though, these two 'evil empires' were marching in lockstep, and the 1950-1953 Korean War seemed to prove the hawks in the West right as Chinese and Soviet air support sheltered the North Korean war machine. While communist air power held the skies, Chinese ground troops armed with Soviet weapons took to the field. Despite this apparent axis of evil, tensions between the two were growing.

Stalin was eager to avoid any direct confrontation with the US, limiting Soviet involvement (eg wearing Chinese uniforms, flying under North Korean colours and forbidding speaking Russian over the radio) to the air, and insisted on the Soviet fighters





operating under their own command rather than one unified hierarchy along with the Chinese and North Koreans.

With no shared codes or communications at a grass-roots level, this resulted in very high friendly fire as North Korean or Chinese ground troops opened fire on Soviet MiGs whose markings they didn't recognise, who in turn shot down Chinese pilots for the same reason. Both powers were also severely overstretched; the poorly armed and under-trained Chinese relied heavily on Soviet equipment, which the USSR was struggling to produce due to the ongoing strain caused by World War II. In order to balance the books, Stalin slapped the Chinese with a bill of around \$650 million (approximately £420 million) that crippled the country's economy for decades to come. While the Korean War crystallised on 27 July 1953 into the stalemate that divides the country to this day, Stalin's ignominious end came earlier that same year. On 5 March the Russian premier died following a stroke and Nikita Khrushchev emerged from the power scrum to a more cordial relationship with Mao.

## ★ THE SOVIET LEADER RENEGED ON A PLEDGE TO HELP THE CHINESE DEVELOP THEIR OWN NUCLEAR ARSENAL ★

The new Soviet leader quickly pledged technical support for China's attempts to industrialise, along with over 520 million rubles in loans. The two leaders also encouraged Vietnamese communist premier, Ho Chi Minh, to accept the division of Vietnam into red north and capitalist south at the Geneva Conference of 1954. Mao certainly didn't like Stalin, but as Khrushchev increasingly pulled away from the tyrant's old order, Mao began to see this as an affront – perhaps even threat – to his own regime. Khrushchev's denunciation of the dead leader's cult of personality in 1956 came as Mao was building his own, and Khrushchev's talk of 'peaceful coexistence' with the West clashed with Mao's increasing belligerence and

militancy. Then the Soviet leader reneged on a pledge to help the Chinese develop their own nuclear arsenal, even using the USSR's veto to keep China out of the UN.

All things considered, the initial response was fairly restrained, with China criticising Yugoslavia and the Soviets criticising Albania, whose paranoid despot Enver Hoxha had denounced Khrushchev's 'coexistence' with the West in favour of China. As the denunciations moved into the open in 1960 – the year of the Split proper – they became more overt and more cutting.

Despite the widening gulf between the two countries, the US remained largely oblivious with then vice-president Richard Nixon wondering in a 1959 meeting of the US National Security Council whether any talk of a Sino-Soviet spat might in fact be some dastardly plot. The following year President Eisenhower agreed with Chiang Kai-shek (who by this point was ruling only the island of Taiwan) that "the communist bloc works as a bloc, pursues a global scheme, and no party to the bloc takes independent action."

Though Khrushchev made headlines in Europe and North America for his table-banging rhetoric and his ghoulish declaration of "We will bury you", the man who started the 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis should perhaps also be remembered as the man who ended it. Mao criticised the Soviet leader openly for backing down, and by the time the Soviet leader made his first nuclear threats over Zhenbao/Damansky in 1964, the Chinese premier knew better than to take it seriously.

Only with the rise later that same year of Leonid Brezhnev, who took the Soviet Union to missile parity with the United States and crushed opposition to Soviet influence in



■ The wreckage of a Soviet-built T-34 in the Korean War

## IN AT THE DEEP END...

Personal tensions between Mao and Khrushchev foreshadowed the split to come

Recalling his first visit to China in his memoirs, Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev observed, 'I saw through their hypocrisy... [W]hen I came back I told my comrades, "Conflict with China is inevitable."' This view, however, might have been coloured by a demeaning, later visit in 1958 where the Chinese leader Mao Zedong belittled the Russian from the airport onward, putting him up in a hotel with no air conditioning and flatly refusing Soviet proposals for joint defence initiatives. Mao's personal physician, Li Zhisui, described the Chinese commander as behaving like an emperor, while "treating Khrushchev like a barbarian come to pay tribute."

The next morning came the ultimate indignity for the Russian when Mao forced him into a swimming pool at his luxury compound, Zhongnanhai, knowing full well that the Soviet premier had never properly

learnt to swim. As Khrushchev bobbed uncertainly in the shallows, Mao called for flotation aids – described mockingly as a child's 'water wings' by US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger – allowing him to join the CPC chairman in the deep end.

'He's a prizewinning swimmer, and I'm a miner,' recalled Khrushchev in his memoirs. 'Between us, I basically flop around when I swim; I'm not very good at it. But he swims around, showing off, all the while expounding his political views... It was Mao's way of putting himself in an advantageous position.'

Coming two years after the Soviet premier's denunciation of Stalin, and two years before what is now recognised as the beginning of the Sino-Soviet Split, this bizarre display was perhaps the most vivid and idiosyncratic single portrait of relations between the two communist nations for over a decade.







Czechoslovakia with force of arms, were the threats backed up. Truck-mounted Scaleboard launchers were placed under the command of the officers on the ground for the first time, and the jingoistic Radio Peace and Progress blared all over the globe in a multitude of languages: "Are we afraid of Mao Zedong and his pawns, who are making a display of might on our border? The whole world knows that the main striking force of the Soviet Armed Forces is its rocket units."

Even after the Sino-Soviet Border War ended, Brezhnev knew better than to take his eye off the region, and by 1971 44 divisions of around 10,000-13,000 men, or 32-40 aircraft each, were keeping watch over the vast 4,380-kilometre (2,738-mile) shared border – along with the complex infrastructure required to support them. Soviet troop numbers in neighbouring Mongolia also grew to 100,000, dwarfing the Mongolian People's Republic's own army of around 30,000 soldiers.

Though China and the USSR never waged another open war, they clashed sabres in a multitude of proxy wars across Africa, South East Asia and beyond, through rebel groups and communist regimes. More importantly, the irreparable collapse of the Sino-Soviet relationship radically changed the global order.

Recognising that he couldn't fight war on two fronts – and judging the threat of invasion from the USSR far greater than an American attack – Mao chose rapprochement with the old enemy, leading to an unlikely 1972 state visit of US President Richard Nixon to China. Nixon saw a closer relationship with China as an opportunity to undermine Soviet influence.

Khrushchev died in 1971 without seeing that his talk of 'peaceful coexistence' had come to fruition – but between China and the US, rather than the USSR and the US. Neither did he see the more famous Cold War play out for a further two decades, ending with the Red Army's bloody withdrawal from Afghanistan and, subsequently, the ultimate dissolution of the Soviet Union.



Chinese soldiers surrender to US Marines during the Korean War





# ULTIMATE COLD WAR WEAPONS

FROM THE DESTRUCTIVE AND TERRIFYING, TO THE STEALTHY AND DOWNRIGHT WEIRD, THE COLD WAR SAW THE WORLD'S SUPERPOWERS DEVELOP SOME TRULY UNBELIEVABLE MILITARY HARDWARE

**N**

uclear missiles may have defined the Cold War but, while looming annihilation might have had those who lived through the four decades of the mid-20th Century ready to 'duck and cover' at any moment, an arms race of a different kind was also underway between the superpowers on both sides of the Atlantic Ocean.

While Russian and American nuclear stockpiles ramped up from a few thousand warheads in the late Fifties to a combined total of nearly 70,000 during the Cold War peak of the late Eighties, a battery of strange and terrible weapons were being developed on both sides of the Iron Curtain. Some of these were outlandishly impractical, prohibitively expensive or too awful to ever be made a

reality. Some saw limited use while others evolved into today's military technology, or pushed new boundaries in aviation, just like the SR-71 Blackbird seen here.

Others still, like the Tsar Bomba, were freakish extremes of more conventional weapons. Here are just some of the silliest, scariest and most ground-breaking Cold War technologies to ever have been conceived.



# LOCKHEED SR-71 BLACKBIRD

**CREW:** ONE PILOT AND ONE RECON SYSTEMS OPERATOR  
**WINGSPAN:** 55FT 7IN (16.7M)  
**MAX SPEED:** 3,674 KM/H (2,283MPH)  
**RANGE:** 5,925KM (3,682 MILES)  
**MAX ALTITUDE:** 85,000FT+  
**POWER:** 2 X PRATT & WHITNEY J58-1S

## LOCKHEED SR-71 BLACKBIRD

**YEAR:** 1966 **COUNTRY:** USA

AMONG THE STEALTHIEST AND FASTEST BIRDS OF THE SKY, THIS AIRCRAFT TOOK THE WAR TO THE EDGE OF SPACE

After the U2 incident in 1960, the US military knew it needed a faster, stealthier plane for keeping the Soviet Union under surveillance. Developed by the prolific Lockheed, the SR-71 Blackbird was a technological marvel of its day, capable of breaking the sound barrier and going almost completely undetected by enemy radar.

Appearing like a machine straight out of science fiction, the Blackbird pushed the boundaries of what we thought was possible. With a top speed of over 3,674 kilometres per hour (2,283 miles per hour), and a maximum altitude in excess of 85,000 feet, the plane truly pushed the limits of what was thought capable for aircraft at the time. The pilots were able to reach such intense altitudes, in fact, that they were forced to wear astronaut-esque suits to survive the conditions near the extent of the Earth's atmosphere.

■ A close-up view from inside a Blackbird's cockpit



■ The pressurised suits, similar to those worn by early astronauts, that the Blackbird's pilots had to wear



■ A view of the left side of the Blackbird while on its 1,000th sortie





# SUPERSONIC LOW ALTITUDE MISSILE

**YEAR: 1959 COUNTRY: USA**

BECAUSE THE COLD WAR WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN THE SAME WITHOUT A REALLY NASTY NUCLEAR WEAPON

The Supersonic Low Altitude Missile – or SLAM – was developed under the similarly innocuous-sounding code name Project Pluto and was an unmanned vehicle for a nuclear payload. In the event of the anticipated nuclear war, it could be launched to fly at supersonic speeds of up to Mach 4.2 over extreme ranges of nearly 200,000 kilometres (120,000 miles). It

could achieve these speeds at low altitude and below enemy radar, trailing a powerful sonic shockwave that could shatter windows, flatten small structures and burst eardrums.

SLAM was capable of deploying a varied payload, from a single 6,400lb nuclear bomb to several separate 350lb bombs on multiple targets. This made it a versatile weapon of

mass destruction and certainly one to be feared if it had ever been commissioned.

But it's the ramjet engine that is SLAM's particularly horrible innovation: this device superheated air from the inflow via nuclear fission, rather than igniting chemical fuel. As a result, its exhaust wasn't the benign contrail left in the sky by a common jet aircraft, but radioactive fallout that would contaminate the ground below it.

Even more devastating, the reactor core was practically unshielded, blasting any living thing along SLAM's flight path with a deadly dose of direct neutron radiation. Once its supersonic journey was complete, SLAM would then career into its strategically chosen crash site, which would be thoroughly irradiated by the exposed engine core.

Thankfully, the inherent problem of safely testing the nuclear ramjet as well as its cost, among other factors, meant SLAM was ultimately shelved in 1964.

■ The Tory II-C nuclear ramjet engine, one of SLAM's two working prototypes tested for five minutes at the Nevada Test Site in 1964.



## TRACKING AND COMMUNICATIONS

SLAM was accurate to within around a single nautical mile, or about 1.8 kilometres. Flight computers and antennae were housed in the nose cone and were shielded from the nuclear payload and ramjet. It could reach any target on Earth inside of around two hours.

## NEVADA TEST SITE

America's No. 1 spot for nuclear experiments

After the first use of nuclear weapons in 1945, the US Government founded the Atomic Energy Commission in 1946 to regulate, control and develop nuclear materials. Comprised of dozens of separate areas, nuclear tests were conducted at the site between its opening in 1951, until testing was

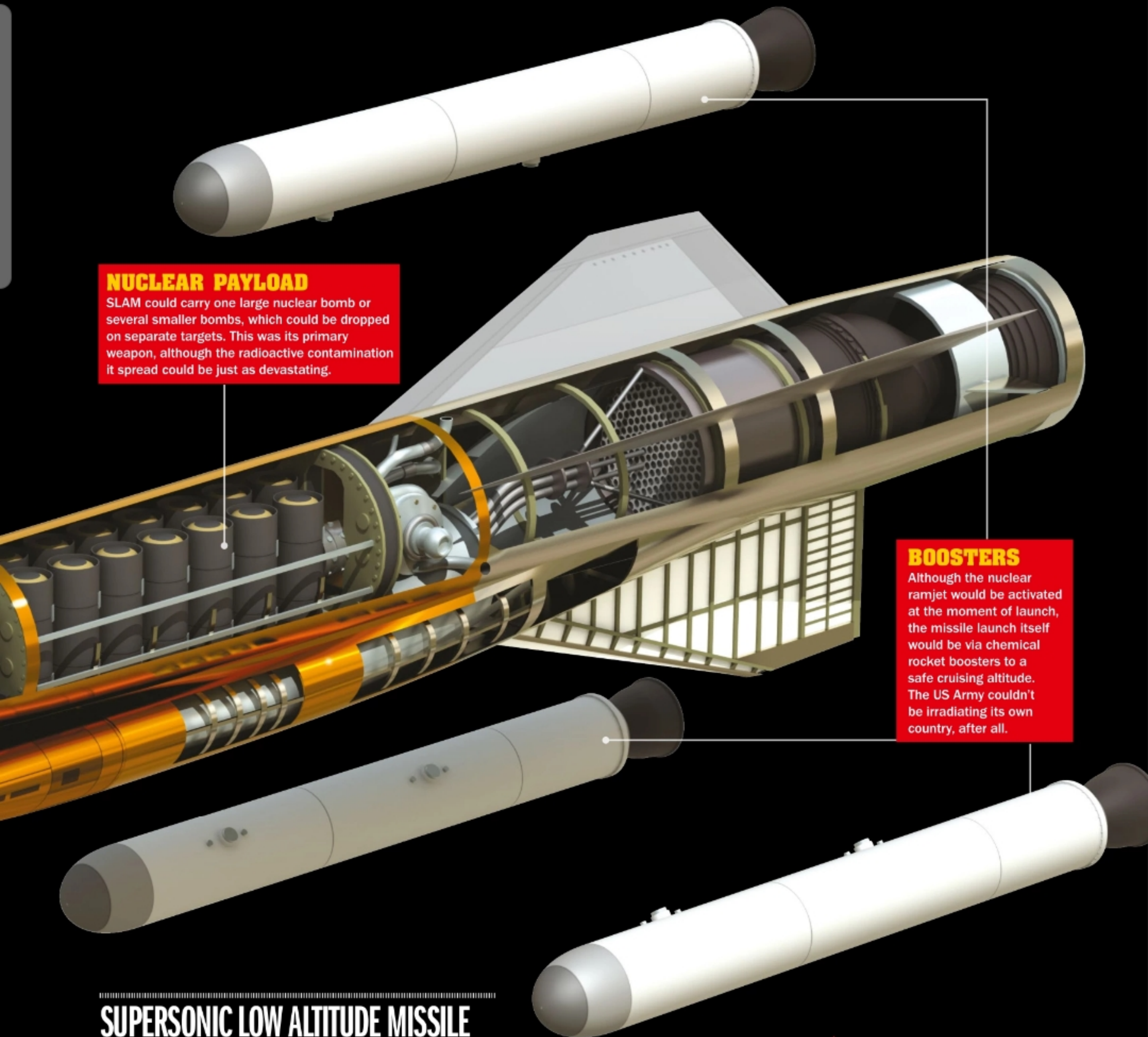
officially ceased in 1992. Over 800 nukes were tested, mostly underground, during this time, leaving the landscape visibly scarred with craters. In 1970 the 10-kiloton Baneberry test went wrong and the radioactive cloud emitted by the blast escaped up to 3,084 metres (10,000 feet) into the atmosphere.



## RAMJET

The nose cone retracted during flight to provide the air inflow for the nuclear ramjet. This type of engine is air-breathing and cannot produce thrust unless the vehicle is moving at speed. SLAM used nuclear fission to heat the air to around 500 degrees Celsius (932 Fahrenheit) and compressed to 316 pounds per square inch.





### NUCLEAR PAYLOAD

SLAM could carry one large nuclear bomb or several smaller bombs, which could be dropped on separate targets. This was its primary weapon, although the radioactive contamination it spread could be just as devastating.

### BOOSTERS

Although the nuclear ramjet would be activated at the moment of launch, the missile launch itself would be via chemical rocket boosters to a safe cruising altitude. The US Army couldn't be irradiating its own country, after all.

## SUPERSONIC LOW ALTITUDE MISSILE

**WEAPON TYPE:** INTERCONTINENTAL BALLISTIC MISSILE  
**MAX SPEED:** 5,145KM/H (3,196MPH)  
**MAX RANGE:** 200,000KM (124,274MI)  
**PAYLOAD:** NUCLEAR BOMB (UP TO 6,400LB)  
**FUEL:** ENRICHED URANIUM DIOXIDE  
**OPERATIONAL WEIGHT:** 27,669KG (61,000LBS)  
**LENGTH:** 26M (88 FEET)  
**STATUS:** PROTOTYPE (CANCELLED)

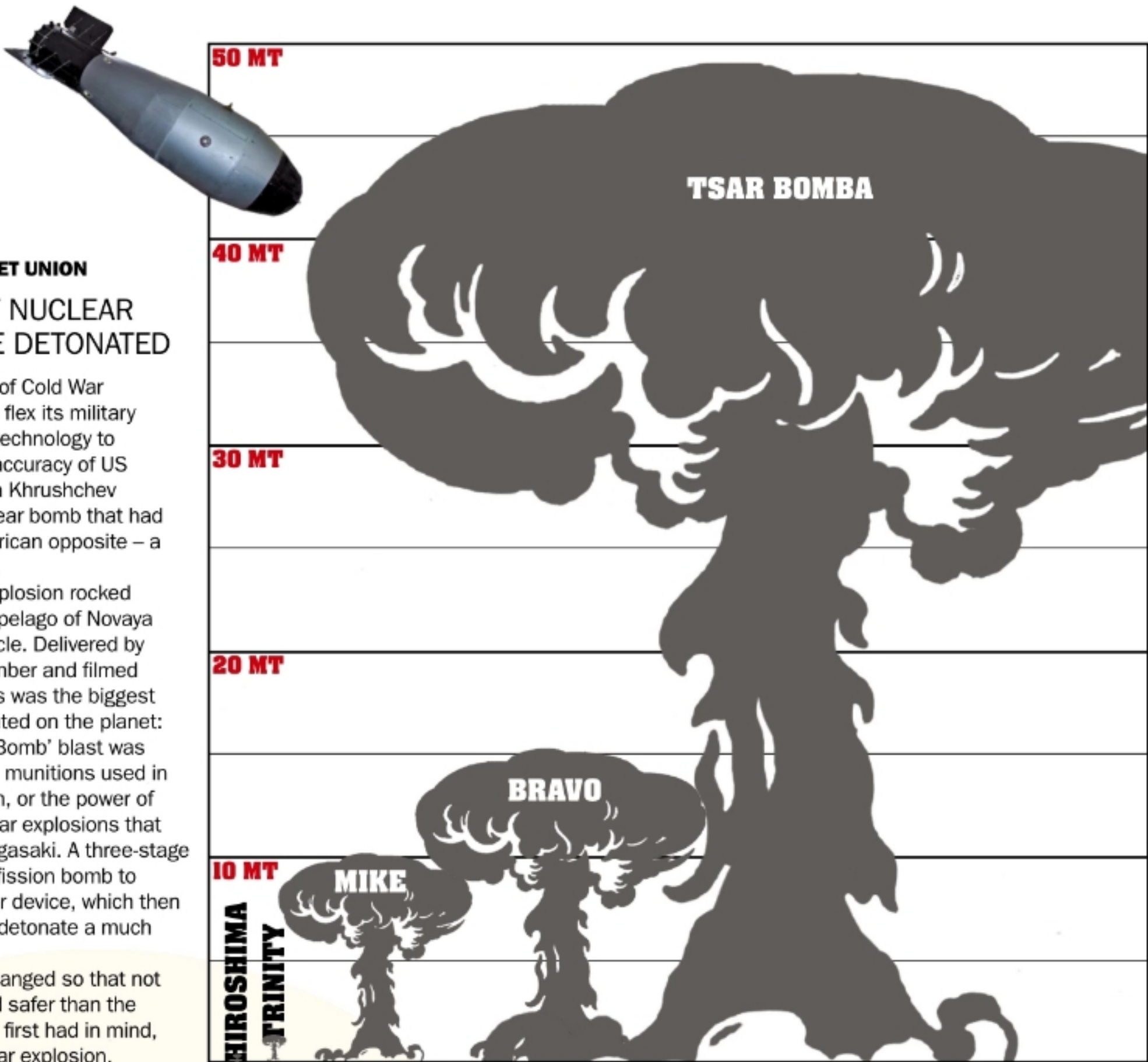
★  
**ITS EXHAUST WASN'T THE BENIGN CONTRAIL LEFT IN THE SKY BY A COMMON JET AIRCRAFT, BUT RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT THAT WOULD CONTAMINATE THE GROUND BELOW IT**  
 ★



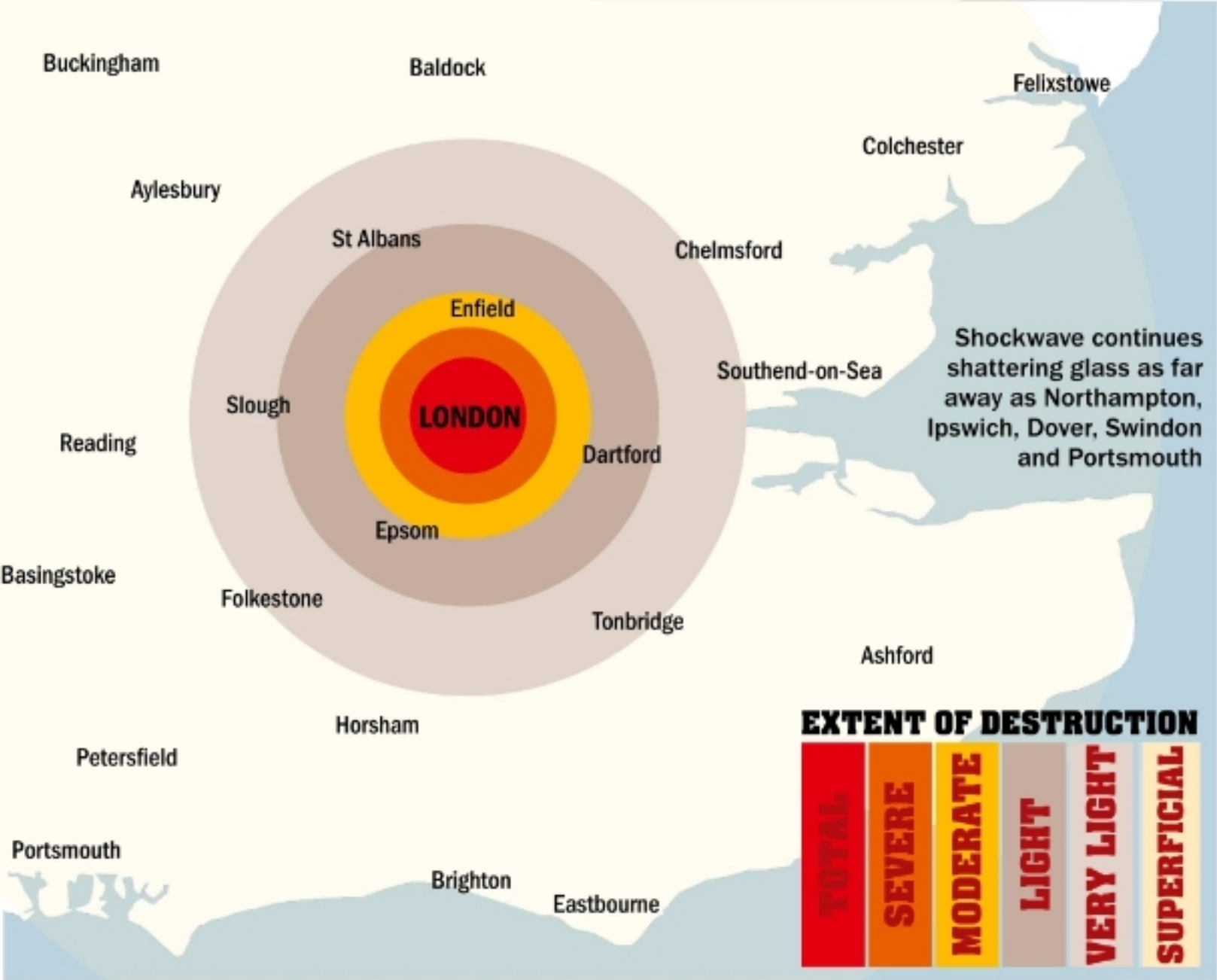
TSAR BOMBA

YEAR: 1961 COUNTRY: SOVIET UNION  
 BY FAR THE BIGGEST NUCLEAR WEAPON TO EVER BE DETONATED

In a particularly deadly period of Cold War tensions, the USSR wanted to flex its military muscle, yet it didn't have the technology to compete with the speed and accuracy of US missiles. Soviet premier Nikita Khrushchev ordered the creation of a nuclear bomb that had four times the yield of its American opposite – a real whopper at 57 megatons.  
 On 30 October 1961, an explosion rocked the uninhabited Russian archipelago of Novaya Zemlya, north of the Arctic Circle. Delivered by a modified Russian 'Bear' bomber and filmed by a six-man camera crew, this was the biggest man-made device ever detonated on the planet: the Tsar Bomba, or 'Emperor Bomb' blast was equivalent of all the combined munitions used in World War II – multiplied by ten, or the power of around 1,500 times the nuclear explosions that devastated Hiroshima and Nagasaki. A three-stage bomb, it detonated a primary fission bomb to compress a secondary nuclear device, which then used the combined energy to detonate a much larger fusion explosion.  
 A crucial stage had been changed so that not only was the blast smaller and safer than the 100-megaton yield Khrushchev first had in mind, but relatively clean for a nuclear explosion.



COMPARATIVE DESTRUCTION OF LONDON BY TSAR BOMBA



The bombing crew barely had time to clear the area before a fireball eight kilometres (five miles) in diameter erupted from the drop zone. The mushroom cloud that emerged from the explosion passed right through the stratosphere, and at 64 kilometres (40 miles) high, was more than seven-times the height of Mount Everest – that's nearly four-times taller than the 15-megaton US Castle Bravo bomb detonated in 1954. Heat from the fireball would have caused third-degree burns to those up to 100 kilometres (62 miles) away, the shockwaves broke windows 900 kilometres (560 miles) away and if it weren't for the fact that the bomb was detonated while it was in the air, seismic shockwaves would have equalled an earthquake of 7.1 on the Richter scale.  
 Ironically, the magnitude of the Tsar Bomba explosion had the effect of unsettling both the American and Soviet governments, resulting in a treaty signed by both Premier Khrushchev and President Kennedy to ban bomb tests in the air, underwater and outer space.

**TSAR BOMBA**  
 WEAPON TYPE: THERMONUCLEAR BOMB  
 YIELD: 57 MEGATONS (TNT EQUIVALENT)  
 WEIGHT: 27,000KG (60,000LB)  
 LENGTH: 8M (26FT)  
 STATUS: ONE MADE, TESTED



# DAVY CROCKETT

YEAR: 1956 COUNTRY: USA

THE LITTLE LAUNCHER WITH A BIG PUNCH

■ A soldier inspects an M-388 Davy Crockett rifle on a tripod at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, 1961. A Jeep-mounted version was also developed



Terrified of the anticipated march of the Soviet army across the German border, the US took it upon itself to stop Khrushchev in his tracks before he had a chance to get a foothold in Western Europe. Nuclear devices being the most advanced and powerful weapons available, the 'Atomic Annies', enormous cannons that could fire nuclear ordinance over a long range, seemed an obvious choice. The US had three of these, but they were difficult to conceal and would make obvious targets if war broke out. So the army plumped for something more covert: a nuclear weapon that could be deployed by just three trained soldiers or mounted on a Jeep: the M28 and M29 Davy Crockett weapon system.

This was a tactical nuclear recoil-less gun that resembled a rocket launcher, but which fired a deadly nuclear projectile rather than a chemical explosive. The accuracy was very poor over long range and often missed the target by hundreds of metres, but that didn't matter much, because the warhead had a yield of around 20 tons of TNT, for a blast radius of up to 2.7 kilometres (1.7 miles). Anyone who survived within 400 metres (1,312 feet) would die of radiation sickness in days, and anyone within 150 metres (492 feet) of the blast would be bathed in an instantly deadly blast of radiation. Around 2,100 were made from 1956, tested in the Nevada Test Site and finally deactivated in 1967.

## DAVY CROCKETT

**WEAPON:** M-388 NUCLEAR FISSION DEVICE

**MAX RANGE:** 2.7KM (1.7 MILES)

**EQUIVALENT YIELD:** 20 TONNES OF TNT

**RADIATION HAZARD:** 10,000 REM (DEADLY)

**FIRING MODES:** HEIGHT-OF-BURST DIAL

**STATUS:** DEACTIVATED

# FLYING SAUCER

YEAR: 1958 COUNTRY: USA

IT WAS ONLY THE LITTLE GREEN MEN THAT WEREN'T REAL

## FLYING SAUCER

**EST. TOP SPEED:** 483KM/H (300MPH)

**ACTUAL TOP SPEED:** 56KM/H (35MPH)

**EST. MAX ALTITUDE:** 3,048M (10,000FT)

**ACTUAL MAX ALTITUDE:** 1M (3FT)

**EST. RANGE:** 1,600KM (995 MILES)

**ACTUAL RANGE:** 127KM (79 MILES)

**STATUS:** CANCELLED (1961)

Amid the B-movie fears of an alien invasion that led to public reports of saucer-shaped spacecraft flying over the United States, someone decided maybe these things were real and some newfangled Russian technology was responsible. If the Russians had flying saucers, then America had better hurry up and develop its own.

That person was maverick aircraft designer John

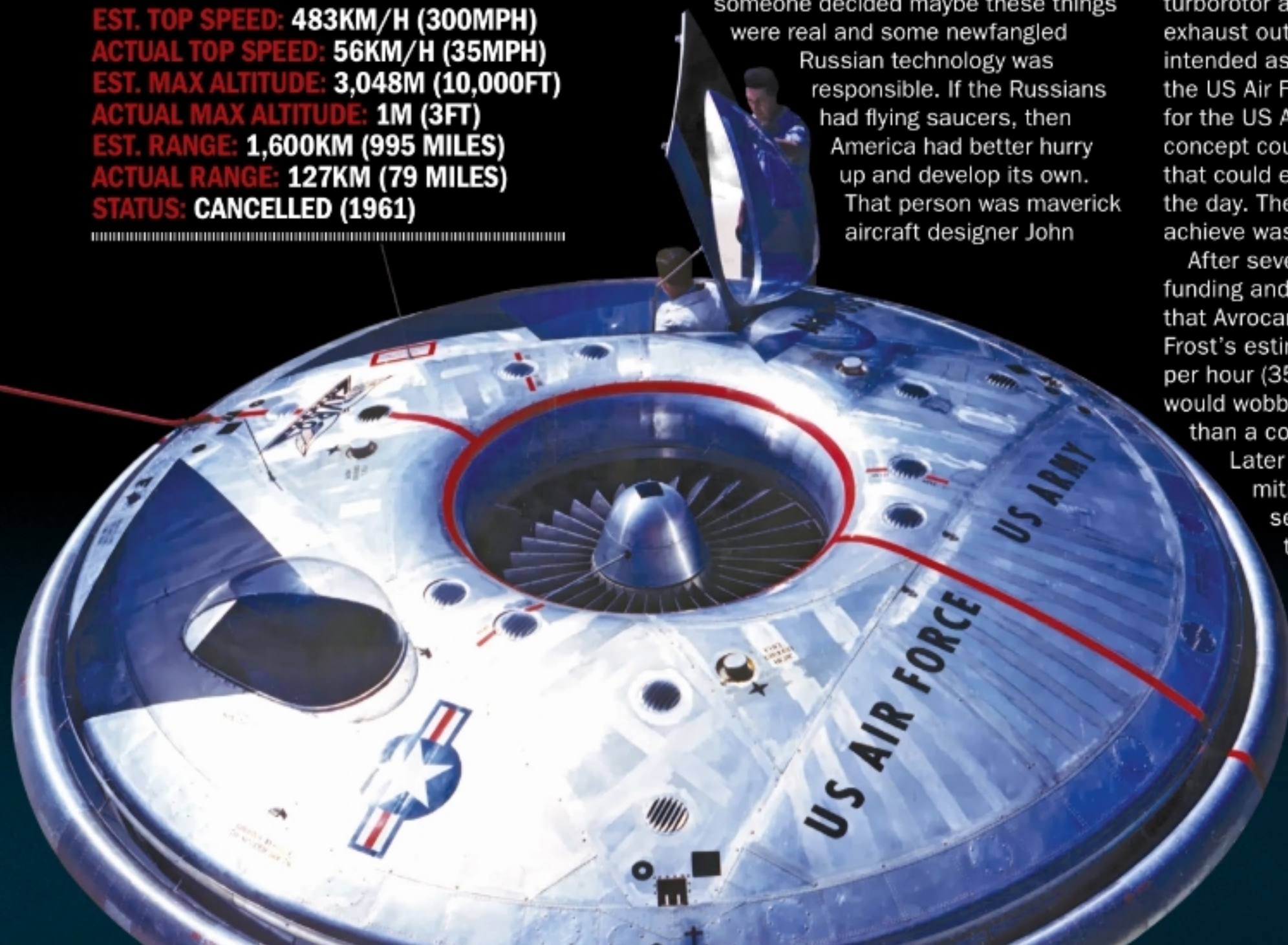
Carver Meadows Frost and the Avro Canada VZ-9 Avrocar was his brainchild, developed for the US military while working for Canadian company Avro Aircraft Ltd.

The VZ-9 Avrocar was a vertical take-off and landing (VTOL) aircraft developed under similar principles as the famous Harrier Jump Jet. It was disc-shaped with a single, powerful turborotor and intake in the centre that blew exhaust out along the rim. It was originally intended as a supersonic fighter aircraft for the US Air Force, and then as a 'flying Jeep' for the US Army. Frost estimated that his concept could achieve a speed and altitude that could easily outstrip any USAF craft of the day. The reality of what the Avrocar could achieve was somewhat sobering.

After several enthusiastic rounds of military funding and prototype testing, it was found that Avrocar's top speed fell far short of Frost's estimates, reaching just 56 kilometres per hour (35 miles per hour) and worse, it would wobble out of control if it flew more than a couple of metres above the ground.

Later modifications that attempted to mitigate this inherent instability only served to generate so much heat that the Avrocar would bake its instruments a worrying brown colour after a couple of flights. Funding was pulled and the military abandoned the Avrocar in 1961.

■ The roll-out of the Avrocar AV-7055, one of several prototypes





# CASPIAN SEA MONSTER

**YEAR: 1966 COUNTRY: SOVIET UNION**

**THIS BEAST OF A RUSSIAN AIRCRAFT HAD WESTERN MILITARY INTELLIGENCE BAFFLED AND CONCERNED FOR DECADES**

Back in the Sixties the Russian 'Ekranoplan' was so secret that even using the word was banned among those in the know. It wasn't until an American spy satellite flew over the Caspian Sea in 1966, taking photographs as it went, that Western eyes got their first glimpse of this very unusual and very large boat plane.

The sheer size of this vehicle alone was enough to catch the eye of US intelligence officers analysing the photos: it was nearly 100 metres (328 feet) long from nose to tail, bigger than any seaplane and much bigger than any US aircraft, which led them to name it the 'Caspian Sea Monster'. It also seemed incomplete compared to other aircraft and was a strange shape, with box-like wings and engines that were too far forward on the main body. Conventional aeronautics suggested that this

aircraft – if that's what it was – wouldn't fly well at all, so it had to be something else altogether.

The Caspian Sea Monster was actually a very big Wing In Ground effect (WIG) craft, or Ekranoplan, a kind of boat-plane hybrid that takes advantage of an aerodynamic phenomenon called 'ground-effect'. When the Ekranoplan flies close to the ground or water, it produces a cushion of air that increases its lift by up to 40 per cent, making it much more efficient than any aeroplane.

This could have allowed the Sea Monster to transport armoured vehicles and hundreds of troops at high speeds across the water. Plus, of

course, because it flew just a few metres above sea level, it would have been invisible to enemy radar at the time.

The Caspian Sea Monster itself was a research craft that was bigger than any jumbo jet and sunk in 1980 after a pilot error. The Soviets eventually went with a more effective version of the original that was less than half this size. Ultimately, plans were made to deploy up to 120 Ekranoplans in the Nineties but, with the fall of the Iron Curtain, only a few were ever built.

## STRANGE CONFIGURATION

This is what had the US military intelligence baffled when it laid eyes on the Ekranoplan for the first time. By placing the engines forward of the wings, the air is compressed between the water and the wings, creating a cushion for the craft to ride upon.

## LUN-CLASS EKRAANOPLAN

Though the sea monster was long dead in the water, its design was not lost forever

Unrecoverable from the bottom of the Caspian Sea, the failure of the Ekranoplan experiment didn't deter Soviet authorities enough to scrap the program altogether. By 1987 the next boat-plane monstrosity, MD-160, was racing across the waters, testing its formidable engines as well as its mounted missiles. Designated as the Lun-class (meaning Harrier), MD-160 entered service in the Black Sea Navy Fleet, but was retired shortly after the fall of the Soviet Union. After the Cold War thawed, there was no need to make any more Luns, leaving MD-160 the only one of its kind – a forgotten relic of a more threatening and ambitious time.



## POWERFUL ENGINES

Ekranoplans needed immense thrust to get them going, supplied by these Dobrynin VD-7 turbojet engines each capable of nearly 30,000 pounds of thrust.



### MULTI PURPOSE

The Caspian Sea Monster was a research vessel with no armaments, but the Ekranoplan could fulfil a number of roles, including transportation and a mobile field hospital. The Lun-class Ekranoplan could house two cannons in a tail turret, as well as six anti-ship missiles.

### IS IT A BOAT? IS IT A PLANE?

A boat plane is an aircraft that can use water as a runway, but an Ekranoplan is confined to water yet flies just above it. It caused problems for Russian military classification at the time, as it was designated a marine vessel and part of the naval fleet, yet it was piloted by air force test pilots.

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**THE RUSSIAN 'EKRANOPLAN' WAS SO SECRET THAT EVEN USING THE WORD WAS BANNED AMONG THOSE IN THE KNOW**  
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## CASPIAN SEA MONSTER

**LENGTH:** 92M (301FT)  
**WINGSPAN:** 37.6M (123FT)  
**RANGE:** 1,500KM (932 MILES)  
**WATER DISPLACEMENT:** 544 TONNES  
**TOP SPEED:** 500KM/H (311MPH)  
**STATUS:** SEVERAL BUILT (MOTHBALLED)



# THE THAW OF DETENTE

AFTER THE BRINKMANSHIP OF THE CUBAN MISSILE CRISIS, THE COLD WAR 'COMBATANTS' BEGAN TO EXPLORE LESS ADVERSARIAL AVENUES. WAS A PEACEFUL SUPERPOWER COEXISTENCE POSSIBLE?

**C**old War tensions reached their zenith with the standoff over Cuba. The world held its breath, but mercifully fingers on nuclear triggers relaxed when the Soviets dismantled their missile capabilities on Castro's island, and secretly, American intermediate-range Jupiter missiles were removed from Turkey. Yet the very fact that such an accommodation between the superpowers had been reached to avoid mutually assured destruction suggested that in future, negotiation could potentially replace confrontation.

In an important speech eight months after the Cuban settlement, President Kennedy set about softening the aggressive and

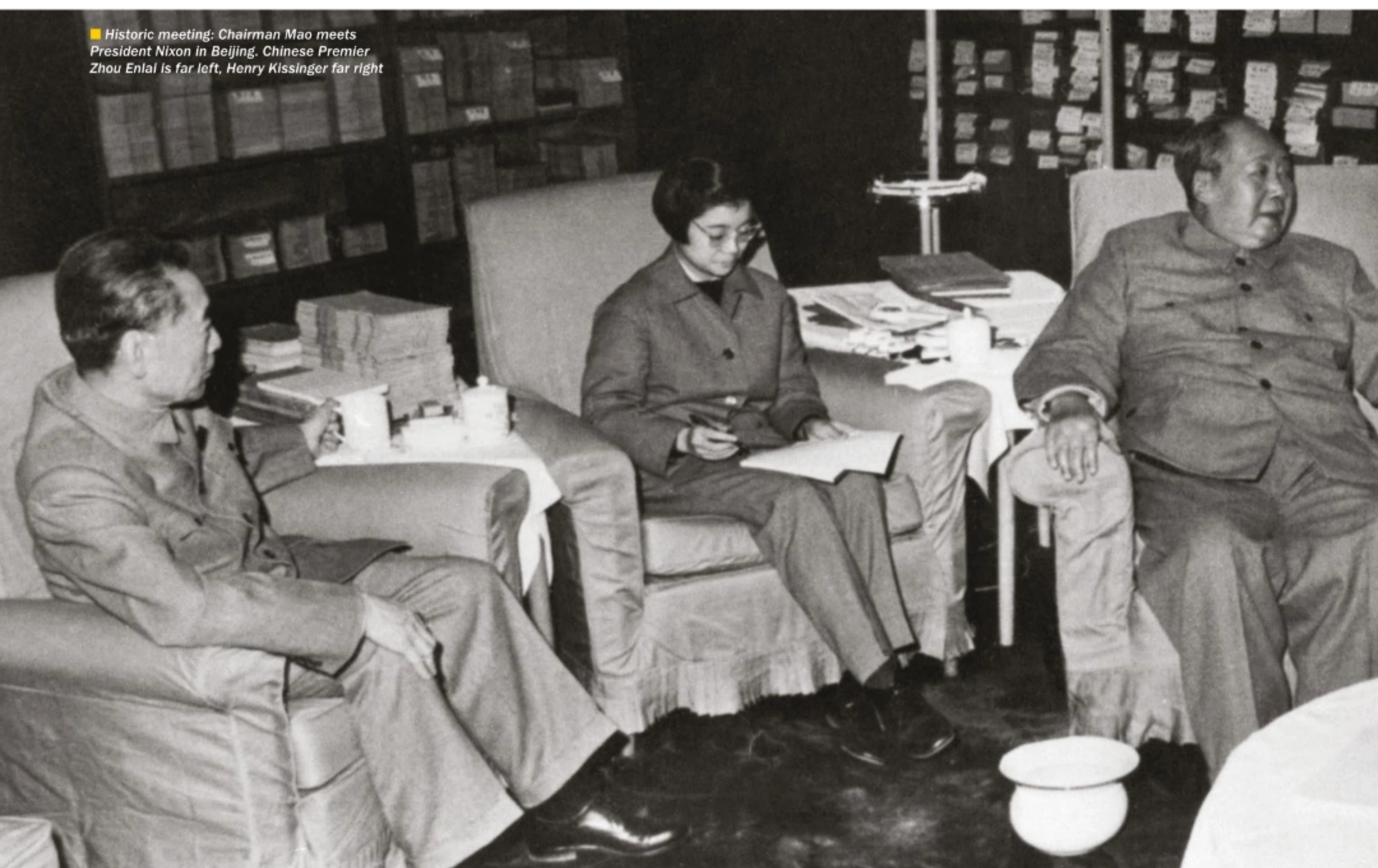
bombastic rhetoric which both East and West had used during the previous decade. He spoke of tolerance and creating a better understanding between the Soviet Union and the US through increased contact and communication. Kennedy hoped to encourage a more enlightened attitude from the Soviets, but stressed attitudes in the West also needed to be revised. "...No government or social system is so evil that its people must be considered as lacking in virtue," he said, going on to conclude, "In the final analysis, our most basic common link is that we all inhabit this small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal."

The speech was well received around the world, and particularly in Moscow. So much so,

in fact, that after years of relatively fruitless negotiations, a partial nuclear weapons test ban treaty was signed by the two superpowers and the United Kingdom in July 1963. Further, the hotline, a direct communications link between the White House and the Kremlin, became operational just over a month later.

Barely a year on, though, key figures Kennedy and Soviet leader Khrushchev were assassinated and ousted from power respectively. Nevertheless superpower diplomacy continued, even after the US became embroiled in the Vietnam War in 1965. Anxious to avoid the partitioned regions of Vietnam unifying under a communist regime – with the 'domino theory' risk that neighbouring countries might go the same way – the US sought to

■ Historic meeting: Chairman Mao meets President Nixon in Beijing. Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai is far left, Henry Kissinger far right





establish and maintain an independent nation in the South. In contrast, forces in the North, led by Ho Chi Minh, were able to turn the conflict into a far more winnable civil war of national liberation.

Support for North Vietnam from the communist monoliths of China and the Soviet Union, however, was inconsistent and far from united. For different reasons, both advised against initial attacks on the South. Once the fighting intensified, both then supplied arms, although the Soviets, seeking closer relations with the US, were more concerned with Europe. An uprising in Czechoslovakia, the 'Prague Spring' in 1968, for example, required an invasion of Soviet troops to suppress it. China, meanwhile, offered firmer aid, with leader Mao Zedong wanting his country to appear the true supporter of revolutionary Marxism. This stance antagonised the Soviet Union. Yet Mao withdrew his country's support for the North when it refused to end relations with Moscow and agreed to begin peace negotiations in 1969 – while a decade later China even attacked the by then unified Vietnam following that nation's conflict with neighbouring Cambodia.

Further flashpoints in other parts of the world, notably the Arab-Israeli Six-Day War in 1967, also left the Cold War protagonists supporting opposing sides. Yet diplomatic relations were maintained – during that conflict, the hotline was used for the first time, keeping

each side informed of naval movements to avoid misinterpretation – culminating in an agreement in late 1969 between the US and the Soviet Union to begin discussions on curtailing the nuclear arms race via the Strategic Arms Limitation Talks. Detente had become a thing.

The word came from Middle Ages French, and related to the loosening of the string of a crossbow. When applied to diplomacy, detente meant striving to ease antagonisms between nations through negotiation or agreement.

While there was a desire for a safer world everywhere, the Soviet Union in particular had firm reasons to seek to lessen tensions and improve relations with the West. Overriding everything was Moscow's need for security, for itself and throughout its sphere of influence in Eastern Europe. Leonid Brezhnev, Khrushchev's successor as General Secretary of the

Communist Party, believed that such security could best be accomplished via dialogue, negotiation and ultimately treaties with the West.

Other factors, though, were also very important. While the arms race was punishingly expensive for both sides, the Soviet Union was finding it increasingly difficult to keep pace, particularly as economies in the East were struggling and stagnating. Additionally, the invasion of Czechoslovakia to suppress the Prague Spring was viewed poorly in some parts of the Soviet Union, and naturally so in the West. Disquiet about the event would be dampened if prospects of real progress towards global stability could be enhanced by detente.

And further, perhaps crucially, Soviet relations with China were crumbling. Never more than lukewarm due to mutual suspicion and mistrust, differences over the Vietnam conflict left the communist powers perceiving

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**WHEN APPLIED TO DIPLOMACY, DETENTE  
MEANT STRIVING TO EASE ANTAGONISMS  
BETWEEN NATIONS THROUGH NEGOTIATION  
OR AGREEMENT**

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each other as a threat. Early in 1969, fighting broke out on China's border with the Soviet Union. With losses of troops on both sides, the Soviets even considered attacking China's nuclear facilities by way of response, though were dissuaded after informally seeking Washington's view of such an assault.

The Cold War adversaries were clear from the onset that detente negotiations would not involve direct attempts to change the prevailing ideologies of either side. Rather, the process was about maintaining the status quo to bring about a non-threatening coexistence between the capitalist West and the communist bloc. It was the view of some in democratic Europe, however, that over time, detente might bring about increased trade across the Cold War frontier, which had the potential to erode the cohesion binding the communist states together...

As early as 1963, Egon Bahr of West Germany's Social Democratic Party began speaking of the need for "change through rapprochement" for his country's relationship with East Germany. Prior to this, Bahr's countrymen had totally refused to accept the existence of a communist half of Germany. Eventually Bahr's ideas were developed into a policy known as *Neue Ostpolitik*, meaning 'new eastern policy'. In essence, the objective was to achieve geopolitical stability by formalising relations with East Germany and the wider Soviet Union so that goods and ideas might flow across borders, leading over time to a softening in the authoritarianism of communist regimes. German unification might perhaps then be possible. By 1969, former mayor of West Berlin Willy Brandt had become West German Chancellor. He instigated *Ostpolitik*, with Bahr as his chief negotiator.

There was considerable opposition in West Germany to the policy, many arguing it was a betrayal to their fellow Germans locked inside the communist area as it would require the recognition of East German state borders. Because such recognition suited the Soviet Union, though, it moved swiftly to agree terms. Brandt was able to sign the Treaty of Moscow in 1970, which recognised post-World War II borders – assigning a large pre-war area of eastern Germany to Poland – and acknowledged the division of East and West Germany. Signing of the Basic Treaty followed three years later, which politically confirmed two German states, normalised relations between both, and allowed East Germany to join the United Nations to give it the international recognition it, and the Soviets, had long sought.

In the same year Brandt came to power, 1969, Richard Nixon was sworn in to office as the 37th President of the US. With a firm interest in foreign policy, he became a key figure during the detente period.

Nixon was elected on a ticket of ending the Vietnam War by achieving 'peace with honour'. Initial attempts at a negotiated settlement

## NIXON AND KISSINGER PLAYED IT WELL, WITH THE PRESIDENT VISITING MOSCOW THREE MONTHS AFTER HIS MEETING WITH MAO

did not go well and the conflict dragged on. Opposition from anti-war protestors, coupled with civil rights issues, gave the president a rocky start to his first term at home, yet working closely with eventually Secretary of State Henry Kissinger, Nixon forged a way forward.

The strategy was to exploit the split between China and the Soviet Union. Kissinger made a highly secret journey to Beijing in 1971 to pave the way for an even more astonishing meeting – that of an official visit of Nixon to China, to talk with Mao Zedong. After years of hostility – even the threat of open warfare during the Korean conflict in the 1950s – barely two decades later, Nixon became the first US president in office to set foot on Chinese soil.

■ A 1975 test launch of a Titan II intercontinental ballistic missile, emerging from its silo at Vandenberg Air Force Base



Earlier in his political career, Nixon had been a vehement anti-communist. Criticism that he was going soft on one of the West's bitterest ideological foes, then, held little sway. Moreover, the gambit of engaging with Mao's republic gave the US the opportunity for 'triangular diplomacy' by playing off its Cold War adversaries against each other. While both were looking for Washington's support, the hostility between China and the Soviet Union meant the US could tilt towards one or the other when needed.

Nixon and Kissinger played it well, with the president visiting Moscow for a summit with Brezhnev three months after his meeting with Mao. The Strategic Arms Limitation Talks had finally borne fruit and the two leaders were able to sign the SALT I Treaty. This nuclear arms control agreement froze the number of strategic ballistic missile launchers to current levels, allowed for new submarine-launched ballistic missiles only after the same number of existing older intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles had been dismantled, and strictly limited the number of



■ Waving their national flag, Czech citizens protest while attacked Soviet tanks burn following the invasion to crush the Prague Spring



■ The second of three summits between Brezhnev, left and Nixon, right, took place in Washington in 1973



defensive anti-ballistic missile systems each side could have. That last proviso underscored the logic of mutually assured destruction, as essentially remaining defenceless against a nuclear attack was thought the best way for each side to avoid one.

Another breakthrough of the Moscow summit was an agreement for a combined US-USSR space mission. A date of 1975 was set for the launch of the Apollo-Soyuz Test Project, a flight to mark the end of the space race between the superpowers. And with a second Nixon-Brezhnev summit set to take place in June 1973, in Washington, it seemed detente was having a quantifiable effect on the Cold War. Further, before the second summit, a peace agreement was reached to end the Vietnam War. Nixon and Kissinger's triangular diplomacy had worked, with both China and the Soviet Union applying pressure to North Vietnam to end hostilities.

At the Washington summit, Nixon presented the Soviet leader with a sleek, imposing Lincoln Continental, donated by the Ford Motor Company. Given Brezhnev's renowned fondness for driving foreign cars at speed along the central lane reserved for dignitaries only in Moscow, this was very well received. Throughout Nixon's career, he had demonstrated an ability to conduct cordial, often spirited, but also usually productive meetings with leaders at the opposite end of the ideological spectrum to himself. In the late 1950s, on a vice-presidential visit to Moscow, his steadfast sparring with Khrushchev was

## KING OF BACK-CHANNEL DIPLOMACY

As first National Security Advisor to Nixon, and later Secretary of State to Nixon and Ford, Henry Kissinger was a key figure during detente

Born in Bavaria in 1923, Henry Kissinger fled Nazi Germany with his family for the US in 1938. He studied at Harvard, producing a dissertation he later expanded into a book called *A World Restored: Castlereagh, Metternich and the Restoration of Peace, 1812-1822*. The book set out the general principles of balance-of-power diplomacy for which Kissinger later became renowned. Willing to talk to the other side,

Kissinger developed 'back-channel diplomacy' – conducting negotiations in secret to enable progress. Anatoly Dobrynin, Soviet ambassador to the US, was his counterpart for many years.

Along with North Vietnamese negotiator Le Duc Tho, Kissinger was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for their efforts to end the Vietnam War. However, Tho rejected the award, and Kissinger tried to return his after the fall of Saigon.



■ Henry Kissinger meets Mao Zedong, with Chinese Premier Zhou Enlai between them. Their discussions facilitated President Nixon's groundbreaking visit



■ NASA commissioned artist's impression of the historic 1975 Apollo-Soyuz Test Project flight, aimed at ending the space race





■ US planes bombing North Vietnam in 1966, part of the controversial Operation Rolling Thunder, which lasted more than three years



■ An Israeli tank passing wreckage during the Yom Kippur War. Despite detente, the conflict briefly threatened a superpower confrontation

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# EVEN THOUGH NIXON WAS STAUNCHLY ANTI-COMMUNIST, MAO HAD EXPRESSED AN APPRECIATION OF DEALING WITH HIM... NIXON SAID WHAT HE REALLY MEANT

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recorded, becoming known as the 'kitchen debate'. And even though Nixon was staunchly anti-communist, Mao had expressed an appreciation of dealing with him because the Chinese leader knew Nixon said what he really meant. Now, at the second meeting with Brezhnev, the pair had agreed to make their summits an annual event. They also signed the Agreement on the Prevention of Nuclear War, which was a preliminary framework for the US and the Soviet Union to avoid serious conflict via international co-operation.

Despite that, old Cold War anxieties resurfaced the following October during the Yom Kippur War. Combined Arab forces co-ordinated by Egypt and Syria launched a surprise attack, looking to regain territory lost to Israel in the 1967 conflict. With extensive resupplying to Israel from the US, and to the Arabs from the Soviet Union, a United Nations ceasefire arrangement was ignored. Brezhnev wanted the superpowers to intervene to enforce it, but if the US declined, Soviet forces would intervene unilaterally. Washington was not prepared to allow such a shift in the balance of power in the region. Its response was to explain it was urging Israel's government to comply with the ceasefire,

but that it viewed uncalled for unilateral action with the gravest concern involving incalculable consequences. US forces moved to a nuclear alert readiness of DEFCON 3.

A second ceasefire subsequently held, defusing the situation, but the incident showed doubts remained over detente. While the superpowers definitely faced war if a conflict developed in Europe, yet had avoided war over a conflict in Asia, a Middle East conflict was an uncertain 'maybe'.

The third Nixon-Brezhnev summit in the summer of 1974 was held under the cloud of the Watergate scandal for the US president, and was the least productive. The SALT II discussions aimed at reducing the numbers of superpower nuclear weapons continued, but Nixon did not – he resigned rather than suffer impeachment barely a month after the Moscow meeting.

■ One of the last acts of detente – Carter and Brezhnev, watched by their entourages, sign the SALT II Treaty



New President Gerald Ford took up the detente baton at a Vladivostok summit with Brezhnev in late 1974. The proposed arms-reduction package he returned with, though, was heavily criticised by press and politicians alike back in the US for succumbing to Soviet demands.

Ford was naturally the leader of the US delegation at the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, held at Helsinki in 1975. The Soviet Union had called for such a conference many times in the past. But following the Ostpolitik West German recognition of East Germany, they pushed harder for it and succeeded. Brezhnev's aim was to have the borders in Eastern Europe at the end of World War II permanently recognised across the globe.

The 35-country conference produced the Helsinki Accords which, though non-binding and not of treaty status, did indeed formally acknowledge the post-war division

of Europe. Yet the Accords also called for economic and technological co-operation between nations, and, significantly, the recognition of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Reaction to the Accords was mixed. Some considered that the detente process was served better by focusing purely on arms



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**INTERNAL DISSIDENT VOICES,  
 GIVEN LEGITIMACY BY THE  
 ACCORDS TO PROCLAIM THEIR  
 RIGHTS, WERE GROWING LOUDER  
 BEHIND THE IRON CURTAIN**  
 ★



control. Others, particularly critics of Ford and Kissinger, felt the agreements were a Soviet win and a Western loss. If the Soviets thought that too, believing they could pretty much ignore the vague talk of human rights, they were to be proved wrong.

The human rights elements of the Helsinki Accords gave the West leverage against the

Soviet bloc. When new President Jimmy Carter took office in 1977, he made human rights a key component of his foreign policy, using that leverage. Internal dissident voices, given legitimacy by the Accords to proclaim their rights, were growing louder behind the Iron Curtain. Crackdowns followed, but they did little to quell the opposition and left the Soviet

leadership open to accusations of having negotiated in bad faith at Helsinki, harming the prospects of further detente.

Against that background, the SALT II discussions, ongoing since 1972, were difficult and frequently stalled. Eventually though, an agreement was finally reached in 1979, Carter and an ailing Brezhnev meeting in Vienna to sign the treaty. Alongside other proposals, it committed the superpowers to limit their nuclear forces to 2,250 delivery vehicles – which were intercontinental ballistic missiles, submarine-launched ballistic missiles and heavy bombers – and put a variety of other restrictions on deployed strategic nuclear forces such as multiple independently targeted re-entry vehicles (MIRVs).

While the SALT II treaty was awaiting ratification at the US Senate, however, the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan. Communists had taken power in a coup in 1978, but were riven with internal disputes and faced mounting opposition from armed groups. As the situation worsened, the Soviets deployed forces in late 1979, attempting to impose order by installing a new regime.

An outraged Carter withdrew the SALT II treaty from the Senate, imposed embargoes on grain and technology shipments to the Soviet Union and announced the US would boycott the forthcoming Moscow Olympic Games. He also called for a significant increase in defence spending, denouncing the Afghanistan invasion as "...the most serious threat to the peace since the Second World War."

It was language very different from President Kennedy's 17 years earlier. The Cold War thaw of detente was over.

**THE THAW OF DETENTE**



■ Willy Brandt, far left, and President Nixon, third from left, visit the Berlin Wall at Moritzplatz in 1969

**THE FIRST  
 POST-DETENTE  
 PRESIDENT**

Jimmy Carter had signalled that detente was coming to an end, but it was the man who defeated him in the 1980 presidential election, Ronald Reagan, who set the foreign policy agenda to replace it

Reagan's presidential campaign had featured a strong anti-detente message. He did not wish to contain communism by coming to accommodations with it. The status quo that detente seemed to offer was not for him, nor apparently the US public, as he won the election convincingly.

Once in office, Reagan went rapidly on the offensive. Defence spending was hugely increased, while through NATO, he deployed Pershing missiles in West Germany, on the front line with the Soviet Union. He unflinchingly escalated the Cold War, declaring, "...So far detente's been a one-way street that the Soviet Union has used to pursue its own aims." The strategy Nixon, Ford and Carter had pursued for over a decade was now history.



■ The 40th President of the US, Ronald Reagan, consigned the policy of detente to the ash heap of history



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# END OF AN ERA

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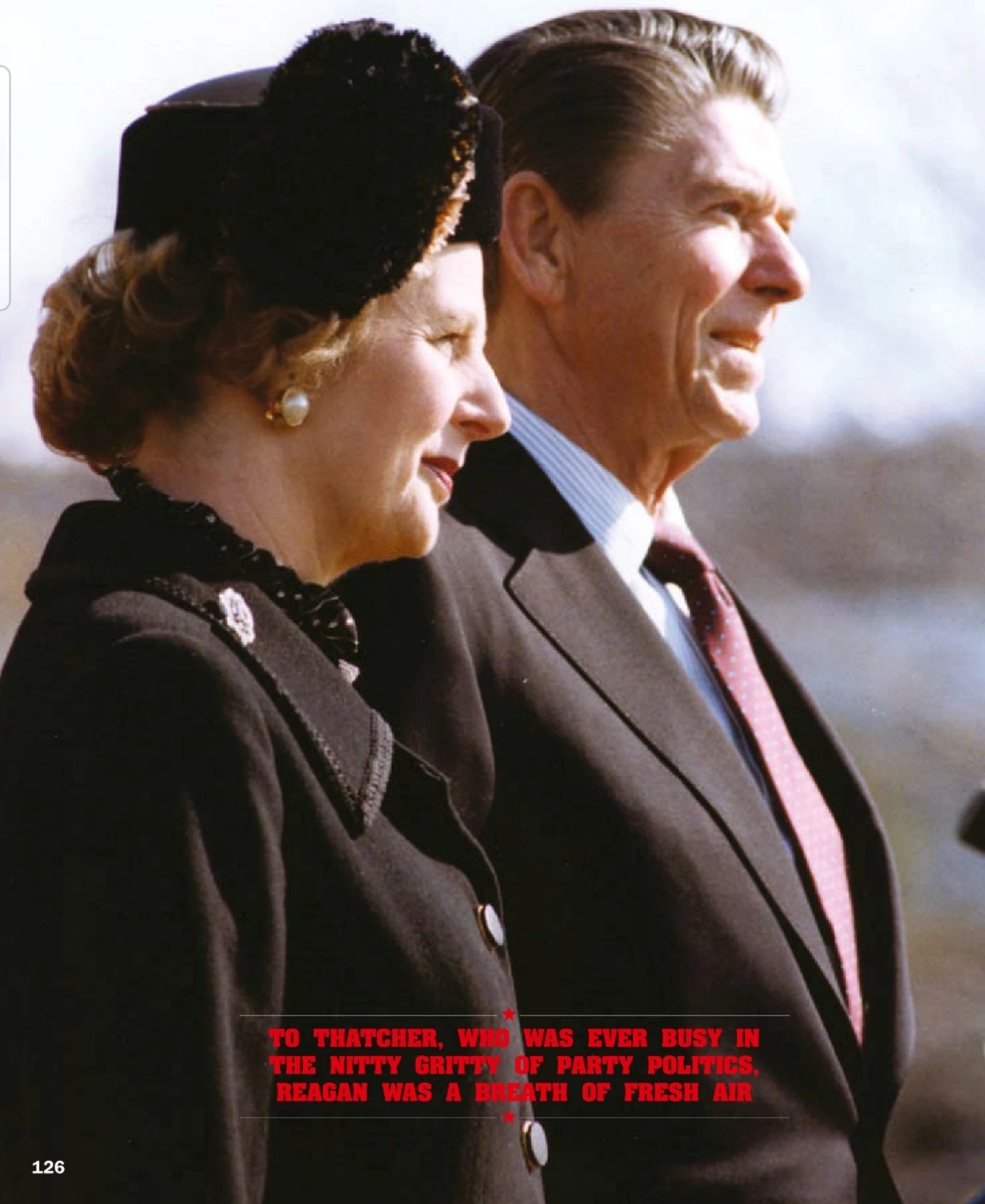
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★  
**TO THATCHER, WHO WAS EVER BUSY IN  
THE NITTY GRITTY OF PARTY POLITICS,  
REAGAN WAS A BREATH OF FRESH AIR**  
★



# THATCHER & REAGAN: A POLITICAL LOVE AFFAIR

FEW LEADERS HAVE EPITOMISED THE SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP QUITE AS UNRESERVEDLY AS THIS COLD WAR POWER DUO, WHOSE POLITICAL CONGRUENCE HELPED BRING AN END TO DECADES OF TENSION

**T**he final phase of the Cold War began with the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and ended with the break-up of the Warsaw Pact in 1991. The 1980s marked the end of 'detente', and the realisation dawned that a 'thaw' might be beginning. It was also one of the conflict's most dangerous eras, when Russian instability and American intransigence almost brought the world to war. At the heart of this period were Ronald Reagan and Margaret Thatcher.

Thatcher met Reagan in 1975, when he was Governor of California. He had called on her at the House of Commons because Jim Callaghan, the prime minister, had been 'unavailable', advised no doubt that his potential guest was from the right of the Republican party. Moreover, Callaghan had no interest in upsetting President Jimmy Carter, with whom the Labour Party had good relations.

Thatcher had only recently become leader of the Conservative Party and was meeting anybody who might further her prospects. She had already impressed the American establishment and her broadcast on CBS from the National Press Club in New York gained her recognition as 'quite a dame', as well as the joking admission that if she stood for election she'd be the next Republican president. Her subsequent speech at a Kensington party rally earned her the name 'the Iron Lady' from the Soviet newspaper *The Red Star*, which played well with Republicans.

Reagan, of course, was best known in Britain for being a Hollywood actor, but Thatcher had no real interest in the cinema and rarely went – her daughter Carol Thatcher remembered having to nag her mother to see a film in the school holidays. So whatever Thatcher expected at her first meeting, she was pleasantly surprised by the suave and sophisticated politician who knew how to use his Hollywood skills to advantage.

Reagan was an older man, and throughout her early career Thatcher had relied on older male mentors she could confide in. Reagan would meet all her criteria for political reliability in a world where she felt she could no longer fully trust her fellow British Conservatives. Their first meeting was a meeting of minds, and they began producing a wish list for the future, as neither was in any position to act on

the national or international stage. The formal meeting soon turned into an informal chat. It was scheduled for 45 minutes, but continued for an hour and a half.

Reagan and Thatcher soon realised they had much in common. Reagan was impressed with their coincidence of views. "We found," he recalled, "that we were really akin with regard to our views on economics and governments," and, more pertinently, the "government's place in people's lives." Denis Thatcher had already encountered Reagan in 1969 and had been impressed. Thatcher herself was vaguely in awe, for his success in California had showed her that moral conviction and political action could be united.

Reagan appeared not to be a traditional politician at all, rather he was the embodiment of the principles he put into practice. The fact that the British political establishment had underrated him and ignored his rise was, according to Thatcher, because he appeared 'detached' and worked with 'a broad brush'. Yet for her he was the very epitome of a potential leader of the United States. Reagan's self-confidence, breezy smile and willingness to call the Soviets' bluff appeared crass and simplistic to those with jaded palettes. To Thatcher, however, who was ever busy in the nitty gritty of party politics, he was a breath of fresh air.

Thatcher and Reagan met again at Westminster in 1978. The meeting sealed the political and moral vision that had remained consistent since their first meeting. Thatcher had adopted the economic policies advocated by Frederick Hayek and Milton Friedman, which were filtering into British thought through advocates of monetarist policy such as Alfred Sherman and Sir Keith Joseph. The experiments by the so-called Chicago Boys in Chile seemed to confirm the rightness of neoliberalism, ready for when Thatcher came to power in 1979 and Reagan achieved the presidency in 1980.

This new form of 'liberal' Conservatism was one that was consistent in both Washington and London, differing in the way it was articulated according to local conditions. Thatcher and Reagan emphasised the moral imperative of individual achievement that had been stifled, so the two leaders believed, by collectivist interference in ordinary lives. The rollback of the state was to be the first blow in

ending collectivism and socialism.

'Reaganomics' concentrated on what became known as 'supply-side' or 'trickle-down' economics, which was adapted on both sides of the Atlantic as the free market. In America, the free market, based on the drastic reduction of government spending and the restriction of the money supply, would stop the so-called 'stagflation' (unemployment and inflation) of Carter's presidency, while in Britain such policies as curbing the money supply, dramatically cutting local government spending and the 'destruction' of union power were intended to achieve similar results. Thatcher added to Reagan's programme of patriotic regeneration a strong, and very English, nationalism – a belief in 'self-help' (Victorian values) and a strongly developed moral compass in her Methodism.

Reform at home was to be reinforced by a vigorous foreign policy designed to curb the Soviet Union, whose invasion of Afghanistan was seen as part of the 'Brezhnev Doctrine' of Soviet expansionism first conceived in 1968. Such expansionist policies might be accomplished through the use of the Cubans



■ Reagan and Thatcher take a walk during the latter's visit to the president's Camp David retreat



# NUCLEAR WARFARE

With the East and West struggling for dominance, the world became a much scarier place as powers stockpiled deadly nuclear weapons



## UNITED STATES

The US is the only country to have used a nuclear bomb when it destroyed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945. Since then, the United States has spent \$8.75 trillion (£5.79 trillion) on nuclear weaponry, maintaining a stockpile of 70,000 weapons, a total that only declined after the fall of the Soviet Union. In the 1980s, the United States also maintained a huge commitment to its navies across the globe and its air force and army still based in Europe.



## BRITAIN

Britain tested a nuclear bomb in 1952 and sought to maintain an independent deterrent, but has been tied to American technology and information since 1960. Information was, and still is, regularly exchanged between GCHQ and the NSA, and civilian nuclear reactors produced plutonium for American warheads. By the 1980s there were more than 200 warheads, with 160 operational. There were 16 Trident II missiles housed on four submarines.

## CUBA

Cuba has been at the centre of the 'unaligned' alliance of third-world countries since Fidel Castro took control in 1959. The idea of anti-capitalist revolution led by Che Guevara was inspired and backed by the Soviet Union. The Russian attempt to base missiles in Cuba led to the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962. By the 1980s, Cuba was seen to be exporting revolution via 'advisers' to Angola, Chile, Nicaragua and Grenada.



in Angola, revolution in Latin America, global assassination plots or infiltration of government departments and the trade union movement in Britain by Russian agents, sympathisers or even 'pacifists'.

To defend the US against Soviet aggression, Washington developed what became known as the 'Reagan Doctrine', essentially the use of money and influence and the support of right-wing guerrilla groups to stop Soviet encroachment. Thatcher, on the other hand, wanted to defeat Sovietism by strengthening NATO and Europe and through negotiations over weapon deployment. In many ways, the foreign policy aims of the US and Britain were incompatible. Both Thatcher and Reagan were Cold War warriors, but they differed in as much as the American plan made Europe the first line of defence for the United States as opposed to somewhere that needed to be defended in its own right.

Nevertheless, Thatcher implicitly believed in the principles of the doctrine that Reagan spelled out when he addressed both Houses of Parliament in 1982. The speech marked a decisive stage in the battle against socialism on behalf of the 'democratic revolution'. The achievement of a resurgent Britain and an unassailable USA would, despite the sense of unity, result in quite different approaches to power and, while both sides might applaud the other's success at home, they would often sharply differ in attitudes towards foreign policy.

The unexpected belligerence of Argentina and the subsequent Falklands War of 1982 saw Britain emerge almost accidentally from its supposed decline of the 1970s, while later the United States would deliberately develop the Strategic Defence Initiative (SDI) in order to make itself invulnerable from missile attack. Such policies underpinned the need to defeat the 'enemy within' – socialists apparently

bankrolled by the Warsaw Pact. Thatcher had to constantly paper over the cracks in her different approach to foreign policy to allow herself to look united with Reagan in negotiations.

An example of a potential rift came on 8 March 1983, when Reagan made his most inflammatory speech, calling Russia "the Evil Empire." Reagan's own belief in SDI was nevertheless attractive to Thatcher, who wanted to know more "as a scientist." In February 1985, Thatcher addressed both houses of Congress and, using Churchillian rhetoric, defended the 'shield' of nuclear weaponry. Foreign Secretary Geoffrey Howe, unhappy with the hawkish attitude, insisted that there was "no advantage in a new Maginot line... in space."

For this gaffe in protocol, Thatcher had to personally apologise to Reagan and his staff, which, nevertheless, still left her wanting to know about this exciting new development



**USSR**

The USSR had tested a nuclear warhead as early as 1949 and by 1960 it had reached parity of weaponry with the United States. This led to urgent talks (SALT I) to limit intercontinental ballistic missiles and submarine-launched ballistic missiles to avoid mutually assured destruction (MAD). Nevertheless, by 1986 the Soviets had 45,000 nuclear warheads, of which 20,000 were tactical.

**CHINA**

China was in many ways the most secretive country in the Cold War. Having fought the United States to a standstill in Korea in 1952, China tested a nuclear device in 1964. By the 1980s, estimates suggest China had a stockpile of 170 to 180 nuclear warheads. At the same time, China obtained the miniaturisation techniques being developed by the United States for the W88 warhead.

in defence strategy. It was, however, such a secretive operation that Thatcher actually did not know what Reagan was talking about and probingly asked Bud McFarlane, the national security adviser: "Are you keeping SDI under appropriate restraint, adhering to the ABM (anti-ballistic missile) treaty and so forth?" She did not get any further in finding out if SDI was all a fairy story or not.

The shoe was on the other foot when Reagan had to phone Thatcher to explain his reasons behind the decision to invade Grenada, which had a left-wing government backed by Cuban troops but was also a full member of the Commonwealth. When US bombers flew from RAF bases to bomb Libya on 15 April 1986, Reagan gallantly asked for permission he did not need.

Where tensions emerged most was in nuclear disarmament discussions with the Russians. Reagan seemed to have had little

concern for Europe; there were, however, two sets of problems to be resolved. There was the problem of intermediate-range nuclear forces, dealt with in INF diplomacy. This had its origins in a speech by Leonid Brezhnev, who had proposed a moratorium on theatre nuclear forces, which was seen as a sleight of hand. There was also the ongoing SALT negotiations to limit strategic weapons (from which the United States eventually withdrew in 1986). Both could be used as leverage to create a final arms race for which the Russians were economically unprepared, but the risk remained that the INF negotiations might leave Europe vulnerable to a Soviet invasion or first strike. The need to understand the Soviet mind even led Thatcher to hold a series of seminars at Chequers, the prime minister's country house retreat, in 1983.

Nothing seemed to change until the death of Soviet leader Konstantin Chernenko and

★  
**NEVERTHELESS, THATCHER IMPLICITLY BELIEVED IN THE PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE THAT REAGAN SPELLED OUT WHEN HE ADDRESSED BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT IN 1982**  
★



■ Thatcher and Reagan meet at the Chamber of Communes in London on 28 November 1978

the accession of Mikhail Gorbachev, a man Thatcher came to like and a man she could "do business with." She met him first at Chequers and later in Moscow. Gorbachev and Reagan met in Reykjavik in November 1985, by which time Thatcher concluded the Russians 'had lost the game'.

Following the Reykjavik summit, Reagan inadvertently suggested a nuclear-free Europe. This sent Thatcher into a spin; seeing her jetting to Washington in November in order to get the president to rethink, which he did, issuing a joint communiqué to explain just what he meant. Thatcher concluded that she 'had reason to be pleased'.

Reagan always acted unilaterally when he could. His decisions on Libya and Grenada were taken in Washington, not in consultation with his closest European ally. His willingness to develop nuclear defence strategies without any regard to British interests and his sometime



## END OF AN ERA



■ US Marines guard captured members of the People's Revolutionary Army during the invasion of Grenada



■ HMS Invincible, a Royal Navy light aircraft carrier, returns home from the Falklands

lack of diplomatic tact and disinterest in the fine detail meant Thatcher would have to fire-fight or fly across the Atlantic to get the presidential message on track. The fact that she recognised she was a 'moral' force that tempered American haste and diplomatic disinterest in European affairs was, arguably, Thatcher's greatest diplomatic achievement.

Although Thatcher would not deal with terrorist blackmail, she had visited the US and publically supported Reagan during the Iran-Contra scandal of 1987, in which National Security Council staff member Oliver North sent arms to Iran to secure the release of American prisoners in Lebanon and filter money to anti-communists in Nicaragua. She also publically supported the American strategic aim of eliminating all intermediate-range nuclear weapons and the modernisation of short-range equipment, although she privately doubted the effectiveness of the policy. Appearing on the US's Face The Nation, her performance was described by Reagan as "magnificent" in its defence of American values. In November that year, Thatcher made her last visit to see Reagan. He praised her stance on nuclear weaponry while she praised the efforts of them both to bring an end to the Cold War.

At a State Department dinner held in Thatcher's honour, Secretary of State George Shultz presented her with a new handbag, in

honour of the role her handbags had played in East-West relations. He claimed that she might fish a text out of her handbag stating that the "special relationship was as strong as ever." Later, Reagan wrote to Thatcher saying that their fruitful partnership had "strengthened the ability and resolve of the western alliance to defend itself and the cause of freedom everywhere."

Thatcher returned the compliment by congratulating Reagan on "changing attitudes and perceptions about what was possible." It was hardly a last set of love letters, but it was testament to the close ties between these two heads of state, who admired each other while simultaneously pursuing aims that sometimes coincided and sometimes diverged.

Reagan and Thatcher had policies that were intended to contain and neutralise the Soviet threat and world socialism. They were caught by surprise by Russia's collapse and they had not considered policies that might create a better world after the end of the Cold War. Both miscalculated the rise of Boris Yeltsin and the

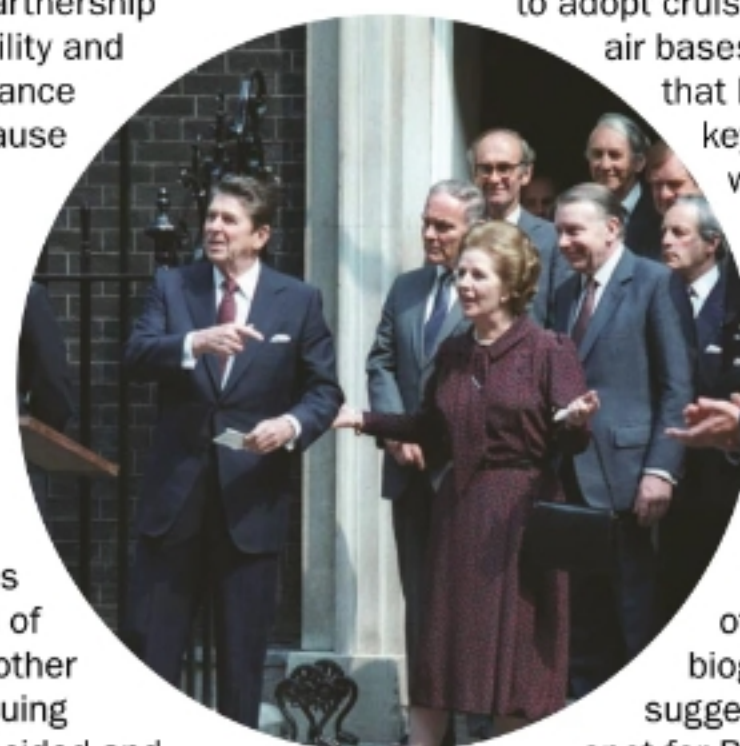
demise of Gorbachev and both failed to see what might happen in the Middle East.

Support for American foreign policy came at a price. Thatcher's first government had plans for a series of nuclear bunkers and had issued pamphlets in case of a nuclear strike. Against a background of Labour unilateralism, Thatcher paid a price for relying on American diplomatic acquiescence in the Falklands War and American supplies of Sidewinder missiles. Britain agreed to update Trident to continue Britain's 'independent deterrent' and agreed to adopt cruise missiles for use on US

air bases. It was also confirmed that Britain would hold no 'dual' key to any American nuclear weapons in Britain.

Opinions regarding Thatcher's relationship with the president have always been mixed and sometimes scurrilous. One famous poster represented her as heroine Scarlett O'Hara saved from the flames of Atlanta by Reagan. Her biographer John Campbell suggested Thatcher had a soft

spot for Reagan that went beyond politics and into friendship, while Neil Kinnock called her Reagan's "poodle." Thatcher herself felt that she had "some influence on... Reagan". In the final analysis, Thatcher was sometimes the voice of moderation and occasionally the Reagan administration listened. Either way, the stakes could not have been higher and the result no less certain.



## ENDING THE COLD WAR

**1975**

Thatcher becomes leader of the Conservatives and meets Reagan. Moscow's Red Star newspaper calls her 'the Iron Lady'.



**1978**

Thatcher meets Reagan for the second time at Westminster.



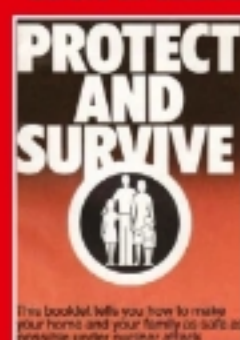
**1979**

Thatcher becomes prime minister. The Soviet Union invades Afghanistan.



**1980**

The British government prepares an information pamphlet, Protect and Survive, which would be distributed to all homes in Britain 72 hours before an attack.



**1981**

Reagan is sworn in as president of the United States.



**1982**

The Falklands War begins. Reagan unveils his 'Reagan Doctrine' to the British Parliament.

**1983**

Thatcher is re-elected. The US invades Grenada.



# POLITICAL SOUL MATES?

## ON THE STATE

Reagan made the destruction of Washington bureaucracy central to his policies. He told congress: "Let us speak of our responsibility to redefine the government's role: not to control, not to demand or command, not to contain us, but to help in times of need and, above all, to create a ladder of opportunity to full employment so that all Americans can climb toward economic power and justice on their own." At the same time, Thatcher talked of "rolling back the state."

## ON NUCLEAR ARMAMENT

The holding of nuclear arsenals was central to the defeat of 'Sovietism' and the victory of the democratic individual. Reagan was in no doubt that the allies "must continue... efforts to strengthen NATO even... with our Zero-Option initiative in the negotiations on intermediate-range forces and our proposal for a one-third reduction in strategic ballistic missile warheads." Thatcher felt that: "A world without nuclear weapons would be less stable and more dangerous for all of us." Regardless of whether this was the case, both Reagan and Thatcher planned for a war to protect the individual rights of those who would inevitably end up dead. Like the Russians, they too were caught in a contradiction that was never resolved.

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## ON WELFARE

As early as 1975, Thatcher had stated: "It's not that our people are suddenly reverting to the ideals of laissez-faire... It's rather that they are reviving a constructive interest in the noble ideals of personal responsibility." Reagan made the 'curse' of welfare central to his address to the nation in 1986. "We're in danger of creating a permanent culture of poverty as inescapable as any chain or bond - a second and separate America," he said.

## ON COMMUNISM

Nowhere were Thatcher and Reagan more vehement than on the nature of socialism. In a television interview in 1976, Thatcher made her first assault on socialist lifestyle. "Look at the large numbers of people who live on council estates," she declared, "many of them would like to buy their own homes. Oh, but that's not approved of by a Socialist government." Her attitude was encapsulated by Reagan's blunt hatred of the communist menace. In his address to the Houses of Parliament he was clear that: "There is now a plan and a hope for the long term - the march of freedom and democracy that will leave Marxism-Leninism on the ash-heap of history."

**1984**

Reagan is re-elected. Thatcher meets Gorbachev at Chequers.



**1985**

Gorbachev becomes general secretary of the Soviet Communist Party.



**1986**

The United States withdraws from SALT II negotiations. Reagan and Gorbachev meet at a summit in Reykjavik. The Iran-Contra scandal is exposed. Libya is bombed.



**1987**

Thatcher is re-elected for a second time. She travels to Moscow and meets with Gorbachev.

**1988**

Libya retaliates with the Lockerbie bombing.



**1989**

Reagan leaves office. The Berlin Wall falls.



**1990**

Thatcher leaves office. Kuwait is invaded.



**1991**

The Warsaw Pact is dissolved.



# EYEWITNESS: FALL OF THE BERLIN WALL

AFTER ALMOST THREE DECADES SPENT DIVIDING THE FRACTURED CITY OF BERLIN, THE MOST ICONIC SYMBOL OF THE COLD WAR'S DIVISIONS CAME TUMBLING DOWN IN SPECTACULAR FASHION

**F**or 28 years, the Berlin Wall stood resolute, an imposing symbol of the Soviet Union's cast-iron hold over much of Eastern Europe. For almost three decades, the citizens of the Wall's Eastern side lived under the watchful eye of the German Democratic Republic, a semi-autonomous government laid in place by its Soviet masters in Moscow. Heavily guarded and laced with barbed wire, the 155-kilometre (96-mile)-long, 3.6-metre (11.8-foot)-high structure ensured the German capital remained divided through the fearful years of the Cold War. No East German was permitted to cross the border into the West; the sights and sounds of a free Berlin a few hundred yards away a constant reminder of how fractured Europe had become in the decades following the end of World War II. But as the 1980s drew to a close, this symbol of division became the breaking point in European socialism. Based in Denmark at the time, science and technology student Andreas Ramos travelled to Berlin to witness first-hand the frustrations of a continent boil over in the streets of a divided city.

"When I went to study at Heidelberg (in southwest Germany) in 1978 no one in government, academia or the general public could imagine the Berlin Wall would ever fall or the Soviet Union could collapse", explains Ramos. "NATO was built on the premise of eternal conflict with the USSR. But by the mid-1980s, after the USSR's failure in Afghanistan, it was clear the Soviet Union had to change. But collapse? They simply hadn't planned for change. It all happened on the streets, not within the government. I was in Germany for seven years and then went to Denmark to work on a doctoral dissertation. I'd been to Berlin many times and had friends there. From the edge of the Wall we watched everything, and

when the East Germans began to tear down the wall, we joined them."

A month prior, the first metaphorical cracks in the Soviet Union's hold on Eastern Europe started to show. Communication between Moscow and the German Democratic Republic (GDR) government led by hardline party leader Erich Honecker had broken down as the Motherland struggled to contain its rapidly unravelling vision for a united socialist future. Up until this point, the borders of the Eastern Bloc remained intact, but the growing pressure from refugees attempting to flee the failing communist system became too much for the neighbouring Hungarian government to ignore. On 19 August 1989, Hungary effectively opened its physical borders and allowed over 13,000 East Germans to surge across the border into Austria. As the refugees sought sanctuary in the West German embassy, it sent a shock wave through the infrastructure of the Eastern Bloc. A wave that would reach all the way to Berlin and beyond.

Back in the capital, the streets were more alive than ever. A previously morose and subdued city was suddenly bustling as its citizens took up arms in peaceful protests. East Berliners could sense the government was starting to unravel. The resignation of Erich Honecker, the staunch idealist who had stated only months before that the Berlin Wall would stand tall for a century to come, had galvanised the nation's hope for change. The 'Peaceful Revolution', as it came to be known, reached its height on 4 November 1989, an event that attracted Ramos and many others to Berlin. Arriving on the afternoon of 9 November, Ramos could sense an air of tension, but also one of hope. "The build-up wasn't just in Germany; it was the whole year of revolutions across Eastern Europe. The Soviet Bloc was disintegrating, one nation after another",

comments Ramos. "As we made our way into West Germany we could all sense that the whole continent was about to change forever."

That evening the inevitable finally became a reality. In the weeks since Honecker's forced resignation, his successors had attempted to rejuvenate the party's reputation by holding a series of press conferences that promised radical changes to national policies. Shortly before that day's official press conference, GDR's official and unofficial spokesman Günter Schabowski was handed a small note that confirmed all East Berliners were now allowed to cross the border into the West with the proper identification. However, without any other explanation to help him digest this news, Schabowski was thrust in front of a ravenous media. One garbled and mostly improvised statement later and it was official: the once impenetrable gates of East Germany were opening. The problem was, this news wasn't communicated down to the guards and officials manning the many guard posts along the wall. With frustration building among the crowds of East Berliners, the situation was a powder keg waiting to explode.

As the news started to flood across East Berlin, hundreds of people began to gather at each checkpoint demanding to let through into West Berlin. To Colombian-born Ramos, it was utter chaos, but it was chaos charged by hope rather than anger. "It was November and it was extremely cold that night, but in the excitement

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**FROM THE EDGE OF THE WALL WE WATCHED EVERYTHING, AND WHEN THE EAST GERMANS BEGAN TO TEAR DOWN THE WALL, WE JOINED THEM**

★



■ A crane is utilised to help with the demolition process on a section of the wall next to the Brandenburg Gate



■ East Germans gathered at the Berlin Wall in November 1989, with sledgehammers and axes to tear it down





## IT WAS CLEAR THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS, EAST AND WEST GERMAN, PLUS THE US MILITARY, HAD LOST CONTROL

everyone was milling around in anticipation. Restaurants and bars, which by law were meant to close, were all open well into the early hours. Laws became meaningless that night," he recalls. "People came from all over Europe: we spoke in many languages. There were British, French, Spaniards, Italians, Greeks and many Scandinavians, plus, of course, the Germans. That night, Berlin was Europe. Remember; at the time, there were no cell phones, no video, no Twitter, no Facebook, no selfies, so remarkably, there aren't that many photos of that night. Today, of course, there would be billions of photos."

As Ramos and his friends approached the Wall itself, the air seemed alight with a mixture of confusion, frustration and apprehension. "As the news of the law changing spread it became a massive sense of relief, of 'it's over', of excitement. After decades of baseless promises from politicians and pointless dreams of uniting of families, it suddenly became possible in a delirious joy", he says. "Someone wrote it was the world's largest street party, and it was. 5 million people in one city. East Germans flooded across the borders and went visiting throughout all of Germany. The cities declared free bus and streetcar tickets for them, free museums and zoos, free everything for the visiting East Germans. It was an incredible time."

The Wall was suddenly no longer the impenetrable barrier to another world. East Berliners were flooding into the other side of the city while others started attacking the wall with any tool they could find. The military looked on dumbfounded. Some of them even joined in the demolition job. "It was clear that both governments, East and West German, plus the US military, had lost control", comments Ramos. "They stood by helplessly, watching everyone bustle around. I talked with East German soldiers who told me their rifles were empty. No bullets. They looked forward to coming across the border. West German police,

who are always so orderly and authoritative, just watched. They didn't know what to do; this had never been planned." He adds, "many of us pushed through the wall and went to the East Berlin side. It was mutual: West Germans and East Germans tore down the wall together to unite themselves once more."

Breaking down the wall itself was no easy task, but it became a cathartic coming together of a nation suddenly reunited in matter of hours, after decades of division. Citizens from East and West gathered on each side to start hacking away, pulling away chunks and lofting them on high, like mementos from a fun day out.

Ramos found himself embedded right in the middle of the crowds tearing into the wall on that fateful evening. "Opening the Wall went on for hours", he remarks. "It was made of thick slabs of concrete, nine or twelve feet (three or four metres) high. Small holes were made with hammers, but to open the wall so large numbers of people could pass, industrial machinery was needed. Somehow, West German construction companies showed up with jackhammers and cranes which broke apart the slabs and then lifted them out of the way."

In the months that followed, Germany was unified as a single, free nation for the first time since the final shots of the Second World War and Europe – and the world – was changed forever. Germany would go on to become an economic superpower, but that chilly evening in Berlin has remained an iconic image of social and political upheaval.

"It was one of the most astonishing events of my life. It was 25 years ago and I still remember so many moments, especially the mood", recalls Ramos on that historic day. "The fall of the Berlin Wall ended a chapter of European history reaching back more than a hundred years. However, it also opened a new chapter, and so far, we don't yet know what it's going to be or where it's going to lead."



## TIMELINE OF A NATION UNITING

### WARNING SIGNS

Prior to the Wall's physical collapse, the political landscape regarding it is already falling apart. The opening of Hungary's borders with Austria can be seen as the initial catalyst.

19 August 1989

### PEACEFUL PROTEST

Following a similar influx of refugees into a now-open Czechoslovakia, a series of peaceful protests are organised across the entirety of East Berlin.

4 September

### HONECKER RESIGNS

East German leader Erick Honecker is forced to resign by his own party following his refusal to change the city's immigration policies.

18 October

### WE ARE THE PEOPLE

With Erick Honecker and his 'shoot to kill' edict removed, the Peaceful Revolution of 1989 reaches its height. The chant, "We are the people!" echoes through the streets of East German cities.

4 November

### RUMOURS ABOUND

Crowds begin to gather all along the Berlin Wall as rumours of a policy change run amok.

9.30am

9 November

### BORDER ANNOUNCEMENT

The GDR holds a press conference where it announces all GDR citizens are permitted to cross over to West Berlin.

1.00pm



## WHERE IT HAPPENED



### BREAKING THROUGH

Once the government had broadcast the edict that all East Berliners could travel freely into West Germany, large crowds passed over with little or no identity checks.

### IMPOSING STRUCTURE

Built on 31 August 1961, the wall dividing West and East Germany, surrounding West Berlin, was 155km (96mi) long with an average height of 3.6m (12ft).

### WELL GUARDED

The structure had a total of 302 watchtowers, alongside a series of six checkpoints, with Checkpoint Charlie being the most famous.

### A CITY DIVIDED

West Berlin was divided into three separate sectors, with the United States, the United Kingdom and France sharing administrative responsibilities between them.

■ The wall is now consigned to history, but it remains a potent reminder of Germany's past



## ORIGINS AND AFTERMATH

Following the end of World War II in 1945, Germany was split into four distinct zones, with each one administered by each of the main Allied forces. Berlin itself was divided in two, with West Berlin existing as a free city and East Berlin absorbed into the increasing Soviet grip on Eastern Europe. In 1961, the semi-autonomous communist government the German Democratic Republic – under direction from the Kremlin – decreed that a new wall would be erected to physically divide the city in two, effectively cutting East Berliners off from the rest of the Western world. For 28 years, the Berlin Wall signified a city evolving in two very different directions. When the first East Berlin citizens passed the guard patrols into the free West Berlin, it was the start of the breaking up of the Eastern Bloc and the first steps toward a unified Germany that would see it become one of the most robust economic powers in Europe.



### THE RUSH BEGINS

The first few East Berliners make their way into the West as guards quickly lose control of the situation.  
5.05pm

### MEDIA ANNOUNCEMENT

Huge crowds gather at the Berlin Wall, hacking it to pieces as the media televises the scenes around the world.  
8.00pm

### OFFICIAL WORD

Despite multiple breaches in the Wall, the Brandenburg Gate is officially opened for all Berliners to pass through.  
22 December

### REUNITED

With the Wall itself almost completely demolished, East and West Germany are united in a formal ceremony. The US, British and French governments relinquish stewardship of West Berlin into the hands of a new united and democratic German government.  
3 October 1990



# THE COLD WAR WANES

WITH AN AILING ECONOMY AND A NEW LEADER, THE SOVIET UNION GRADUALLY FELL APART, HERALDING THE END OF THE COLD WAR

**W**

ith the dawn of the 1980s, the communist bloc began unravelling and with the demise of the Soviet Union, the Cold War passed into history.

During the 69-year existence of the Soviet Union, only seven men led the communist nation. Within the span of 30 months during the early 1980s, three of these – Leonid Brezhnev, Yuri Andropov, and Konstantin Chernenko – died. With them waned the influence of a generation of hardline communists and though it may not have been readily apparent, the days of the Soviet superpower were also numbered.

Cold Warrior Brezhnev ruled the country as General Secretary of the Communist Party

for 18 years, but Andropov and Chernenko followed with a combined brief tenure from November 1982 to March 1985. With the death of Chernenko, Mikhail Gorbachev stepped into the breach. At the age of 54, Gorbachev was 20 years younger than his predecessor and while offering something of a fresh perspective on the world, he also inherited a myriad of challenges.

The winds of political change had gained renewed velocity among the nations of the Soviet Bloc. In Poland, the Solidarity trade union gave voice to workers who sought democratic reforms. Elsewhere, latent nationalism and a yearning for democratic government were preparing to burst forth across Eastern Europe. Within the Soviet Union

itself, the Baltic States were clamouring for independence while restless peoples with their own sense of nationalism or ethnicity urged greater autonomy. In truth, non-Russian Soviet citizens had never fully embraced the concept of a real 'union', one that required them to assimilate into a national consciousness dominated by Russia.

However, the most immediate concern for Mikhail Gorbachev was the obvious stagnation of the Soviet economy. Decades of planning had failed to deliver the promise of plenty, resources drawn from those according to their ability and redistributed in a classless society according to need.

Eastern Europeans looked on with envy at the prosperous economies of the Western





democracies, which had emerged from the doldrums of their own recession in the late 1970s and early 1980s. In the USSR, store shelves were bare, and shortages of foodstuffs, fuel, and other essentials plagued the people. East Germans perhaps felt the pinch of privation more keenly than any, just across the heavily guarded border from the flourishing, industrialised economic colossus of West Germany.

In a futile effort to prop up a pro-Soviet regime in Afghanistan, the Red Army was embroiled in a lengthy war against a primarily Islamist-driven insurgency. The cost in lives and treasure weighed heavily on the Soviet leadership, particularly in concert with the tremendous expense of the still competitive nuclear arms race. Building and maintaining the Soviet military machine had compromised the capacity of the Soviet economy to offer even modest improvements in the citizens' standard of living.

When Gorbachev came to power, he fully intended to hold the 15 republics of the Soviet Union together under the central government in Moscow. Still, the surge for independence and reform both within and outside the Soviet Union was undeniable. In the past, the threat of armed intervention, the mailed fist of the Soviet

military, had held independence movements in check. Now, however, Gorbachev could no longer completely depend on the leaders in satellite countries or of the Soviet republics themselves to maintain control of their own populaces. Should the situation get out of hand during this perilous time, the military alternative was too disheartening to contemplate.

## REAGAN AND REALISM

In the midst of such turmoil, relations with the United States had chilled with the 1979 invasion of Afghanistan and the US retaliatory boycott of the 1980 Summer Olympics in Moscow. In November of that year, an overwhelming majority of the American electorate had propelled Ronald Reagan to the presidency, and the Soviet Union's traditional Cold War rival stepped up the pressure. By the autumn of 1983, relations between the superpowers reached a new low when a Soviet fighter jet downed Korean Airlines Flight 007 over the Sea of Japan, killing 269 people including Georgia Congressman Larry McDonald.

The Reagan administration sensed opportunity. Amid protests from anti-nuclear groups, in 1983 the United States deployed

medium-range nuclear cruise and Pershing II missiles to Western Europe in response to the Soviet refusal to dismantle its own medium-range SS-20 ballistic missiles. That same year, Reagan announced the US commitment to its Strategic Defense Initiative (SDI), popularly known as Star Wars, an anti-missile system based in outer space. The Soviets recoiled with concern that such a system would give the US first strike capability. Although it was years from deployment, the mere possibility that such a system might become operational was sobering.

The pragmatic Reagan also realised that the Soviet Union faced unprecedented economic pressure. With twofold purpose he charted a course of revitalising the American military to address a perceived lack of parity in nuclear and conventional forces. The emphasis on restoring the US military and its corresponding escalation in expenditures would oblige the Soviets to keep pace, further intensifying their economic crisis, while in the near future the US would urge negotiations on arms reduction from a position of strength.

Reagan's rhetoric also struck a worldwide chord. In a speech to the British House of Commons, he commented, "...freedom and democracy will leave Marxism and Leninism



■ President Ronald Reagan delivers an impassioned address at the Brandenburg Gate in Berlin, calling upon Mikhail Gorbachev to "Tear down this wall!"





### IN HIS SPEECH TO THE UNITED NATIONS, GORBACHEV PLEDGED TO CONVERT THE SOVIET ECONOMY FROM ONE OF ARMAMENTS TO AN ECONOMY OF DISARMAMENT

on the ash heap of history." He referred to the Soviet Union as an "evil empire". On 12 June 1987, the president stood in the shadow of the Brandenburg Gate in the divided city of Berlin. For more than a quarter century, the Berlin Wall had stood as a symbol of Cold War politics, posturing and pain. Reagan boldly intoned, "General Secretary Gorbachev, if you seek peace, if you seek prosperity for the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, if you seek liberalisation, come here to this gate. Mr Gorbachev, open this gate. Mr Gorbachev, tear down this wall!"

## REASON AND RAPPROCHEMENT

Indeed, the ascendance of Gorbachev had fostered opportunity. The new Soviet leader was compelled to address the deteriorating economic conditions. However, doing so required turning the focus of the government inward, which in turn meant reducing global tensions and curbing the military spending that had impoverished the Soviet Union.

To implement his agenda, Gorbachev did have one strong card to play, that of nuclear arms reduction. He demonstrated a willingness to negotiate, and between the autumn of 1985 and the spring of 1988 the two most powerful men in the world held four summit meetings. At Reykjavik, Iceland, in 1986, they

discussed abolishing nuclear weapons. In December 1987, they concluded a landmark achievement of Cold War diplomacy. An entire class of nuclear weapons was eliminated with the signing of the Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Within months Gorbachev declared his intent to withdraw Soviet forces from Afghanistan.

Reagan and Gorbachev developed a personal relationship that facilitated their negotiations, providing both with precious time because of the tangible results achieved. In May 1988, Reagan stood in Red Square within the fortress walls of the Kremlin. With Gorbachev by his side, the president declared that he no longer believed the Soviet Union was an "evil empire". When a reporter pressed him on the subject, Reagan responded, "You are talking about another time, another era."

On 7 December 1988, Gorbachev addressed the United Nations General Assembly in New York. His words were electrifying. The Soviet leader spoke of global interdependence and "pan-humanist" values, dismissing class warfare, the basis of Soviet foreign policy for the previous 70 years. He pledged to convert the Soviet economy from one of "armaments to an economy of disarmament." His most stunning pronouncement was the assurance that the Soviet military would reduce its ground forces by a half-million troops, that 50,000 soldiers would be withdrawn from Eastern Europe, and that arms would be reduced by

800 aircraft, 8,500 artillery systems, and 10,000 tanks within two years.

Gorbachev added, "Finally, being on US soil, but also for other, understandable reasons, I cannot but turn to the subject of our relations with this great country... Relations between the Soviet Union and the United States of America span five and a half decades. The world has changed, and so have the nature, role and place of these relations in world politics. For too long they were built under the banner of confrontation, and sometimes of hostility, either open or concealed. But in the last few years, throughout the world people were able to heave a sigh of relief, thanks to the changes for the better in the substance and atmosphere of the relations between Moscow and Washington."

## GLASNOST, PERESTROIKA AND REVOLUTION

While Gorbachev pursued a foreign policy of reconciliation, he implemented a two-pronged policy of reform within the Soviet Union. Glasnost, or 'openness', allowed greater personal freedoms, particularly freedom of speech and discourse on emerging political and social issues. Perestroika, or 'rebuilding', was a program of reform that Gorbachev hoped would stimulate the Soviet economic recovery.

Meanwhile, President George HW Bush took office in the US and initiated a reassessment





■ A Soviet-built T 55 tank sits before the Opera House in Bucharest, Romania, during the revolution that overthrew Nicolae Ceausescu



of the nation's strategic objectives. Sceptics doubted the sincerity of Gorbachev's efforts. Others openly questioned their potential for success. Nevertheless, good relations were maintained between Washington and Moscow.

Gorbachev's sweeping reforms sent a clear message to friends and adversaries within the Soviet Union and throughout Eastern Europe. Glasnost fostered an exchange of new ideas and released decades of pent-up anxiety, resentment and dissatisfaction. While the government did not interfere with the newly found freedom of expression, the economic benefits of Perestroika did not immediately produce the positive results for which Gorbachev had hoped. Glasnost allowed criticism of his policies to spread.

While Gorbachev's intentions were noble, the pace of events soon outstripped his ability

to exert control. The landmark address to the UN opened the floodgate for rapid political and socioeconomic change in Eastern Europe. Gorbachev had virtually assured those who would accelerate regime change that the Red Army would not intervene. The former Soviet Bloc began to crumble.

Remarkably, most of the political reforms that occurred in Eastern Europe were accomplished peacefully. In the spring and summer of 1988, a pair of massive labour strikes brought the communist regime in Poland to the negotiating table. Communist rule ended within a year, and the first parliamentary elections were held in June 1989. Lech Walesa was elected president of Poland in December.

On 23 October 1989, the Republic of Hungary was proclaimed. Free elections took place the next spring. Simultaneously, the



## KEY FACTS

Some interesting events related to the final years of the Cold War

**FACT 1:** Shortages of consumer goods in the Soviet Union became so severe that citizens were required to present coupons to buy socks.

**FACT 2:** To damage the Soviet economy, the US pressed Saudi Arabia to increase oil production, devaluing the Soviet Union's primary export.

**FACT 3:** Although Ronald Reagan and Gorbachev were friendly, it's understood that First Lady Nancy Reagan and Raisa Gorbacheva endured an icy relationship.

**FACT 4:** Against the advice of government officials, President Reagan chose not to delete from his Berlin speech the thunderous "Tear down this wall!"

**FACT 5:** In 2004, Mikhail Gorbachev travelled to the United States to represent Russia at the funeral of former president Ronald Reagan.





## ★ CROWDS SOON GATHERED, AND THE BERLIN WALL WAS TORN DOWN WITH SLEDGEHAMMERS IN A FLURRY OF FREEDOM ★

barrier between Hungary and neighbouring Austria was torn down without Soviet interference. Communist rule ended in Czechoslovakia in December 1989 as thousands of protesters shook keys in front of communist officials and taunted them with the chant, "Your time is up!" Free elections occurred seven months later. On 15 January 1990, the national assembly of Bulgaria abolished the rule guaranteeing the leading role of the communist party.

Yugoslavia started to disintegrate as Slovenia and Croatia declared independence. Years of civil war and ethnic cleansing followed. While unrest continues in the Balkans, the nations of the former Yugoslavia currently include Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Slovenia, FYR Macedonia and Serbia. Violence erupted in Romania, and communist dictator Nicolae Ceausescu and his wife Elena were tried and executed on 25 December 1991.

The most dramatic change of government in Eastern Europe occurred in Germany. Erich Honecker, leader of the communist German Democratic Republic (GDR), was deposed by his own party in October 1989 just as the communists celebrated 40 years of the GDR. Two days after the observance, 70,000 protesters took to the streets of Berlin. A month later, Soviet troops stood aside and East German guards opened several gates of the Berlin Wall. Crowds soon gathered, and the wall was torn down with sledgehammers in a flurry of freedom. East and West Germany were formally reunited in 1990.

## SOVIET SUNSET

A month after the fall of the Berlin Wall, Gorbachev and Bush met on the island of Malta in the Mediterranean. Discussions concerning the reunification of Germany, the Conventional Forces in Europe Treaty, and the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) were held. When the summit ended, a member of Gorbachev's staff told the media, "We buried the Cold War at the bottom of the Mediterranean Sea."

Gorbachev further demonstrated his good faith in the summer of 1990 by refraining from interference with US efforts to assemble a military coalition to confront Iraqi dictator Saddam Hussein and forcibly remove Iraqi forces from neighbouring Kuwait.

At the same time, however, the cohesion of the Soviet Union, which Gorbachev had long sought to maintain, eroded rapidly. Estonia had demanded independence back in 1987,

■ Reagan and Gorbachev enjoyed a cordial relationship, unlike their wives



## SPENDING INTO OBLIVION

An ailing Soviet economy was a major factor in the end of the Cold War

Along with numerous political, diplomatic and social factors, the economic distress experienced in the Soviet Union in the 1980s was a prime mover in the end of the Cold War.

Although accurate figures may never be known, defence spending was undeniably prominent among the economic influencers of the Soviet Union's downfall. Some estimates suggest that in the mid-1980s up to 70 per cent of Soviet industrial output was devoted to the military. A KGB official who defected

to Great Britain during the period suggested that at least one-third of Soviet industrial output was related to military spending. Western intelligence estimates placed Soviet military expenditures between 12 and 20 per cent of the nation's gross national product. In 1987, the Soviet Union spent the equivalent of \$128 billion on defence.

A study conducted in 1995 concluded that the United States had spent \$4 trillion on the nuclear arms race during the Cold War.



and the other Baltic States, Lithuania and Latvia, followed suit. Separatist movements in other non-Russian republics intensified, and Gorbachev faced a serious dilemma. Glasnost had given impetus to these movements, but his promises of reform would ring hollow with any armed intervention or political interference.

The Estonian initiative sparked independence movements across the Soviet Union, including Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Moldova, Belarus and the republics of Central Asia. By mid-1990, many of them had declared their independence.

In desperation, a group of hardline communist leaders hatched a coup d'état on 19 August 1991, kidnapping Gorbachev, holding him at a secret location in the resort town of Foros in the Crimea, and falsely announcing on state-run radio that the general secretary was ill and no longer able to hold office. The attempted coup ignited protests across the decaying Soviet Union, and when the hardliners attempted to mobilise the army to quell the disturbances, the soldiers refused to act.

Boris Yeltsin, president of the Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, opposed the coup and with the backing of the Soviet citizenry called for the arrest of the conspirators. Within three days the plot fell apart as the hardliners surrendered. Yeltsin had already begun to exert significant influence on the course of events and openly criticised the slow pace of Gorbachev's economic reforms. As Gorbachev's power ebbed, the Bush administration gravitated closer to Yeltsin, the de facto power broker among the leaders of the former Soviet republics.

Although Gorbachev survived the coup, his political capital had been virtually wiped out.

In a last-ditch effort to keep the Soviet Union together, he had proposed a union treaty that would provide greater autonomy to the republics. However, it was readily apparent that the reform movements would stop at nothing short of democracy.

On 6 November 1991, Yeltsin's government voted to ban all activities of the Communist Party in Russia. Yeltsin met with the leaders of the Ukraine and Belarus on 8 December and agreed to form a new governmental entity, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), which included 11 former Soviet republics.

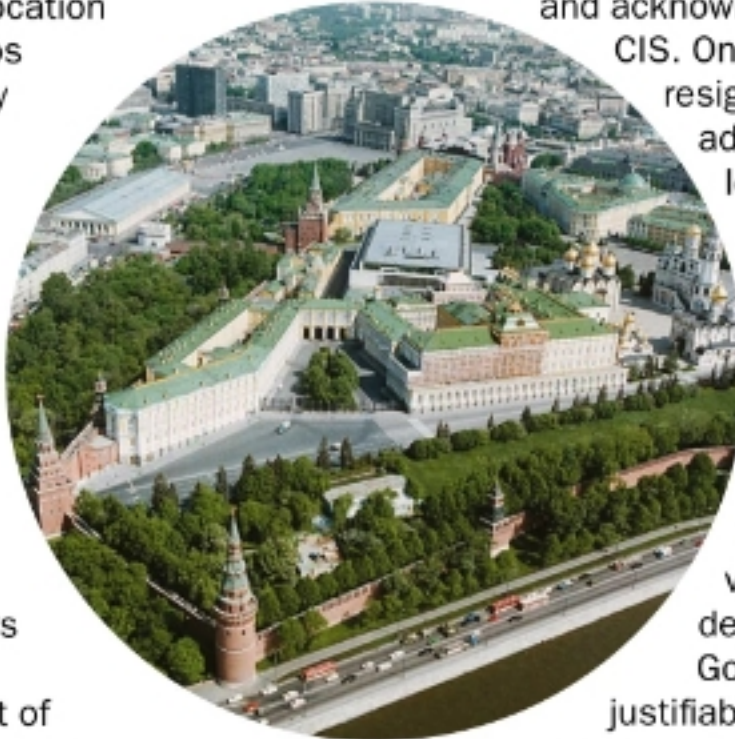
Powerless to affect the tide of rapid change, Gorbachev met Yeltsin on 17 December 1991 and acknowledged the formation of the CIS. On 25 December, Gorbachev resigned. In his farewell address, the former Soviet leader lamented his failed attempt to keep the Soviet Union together, expressing concern "about the fact that the people in this country are ceasing to become citizens of a great power and the consequences may be very difficult for all of us to deal with."

Gorbachev further and justifiably claimed that he had presided over the Soviet journey down the "road to democracy" and had begun the arduous task of moving the nation's stagnant communist economy toward an economy embracing free enterprise and open markets.

Tremendous change lay ahead for the former Soviet Union. The newly emerging republics had to refine their own political systems, energise their own economies, settle territorial issues, and sometimes battle armed insurgencies and civil unrest.

So much remained uncertain.

However, there was one absolute certainty. The Cold War – half a century of superpower contentiousness – was over.



## FIERY RETRIBUTION IN ROMANIA

How the most hardline communist leader in Europe was finally brought to account

Nicolae Ceausescu came to power as General Secretary of the Romanian Communist Party in 1965 and was proclaimed President of Romania in 1974. Initially moderate, his administration became increasingly authoritarian through the years. Ceausescu maintained strict control of the media and crushed opposition with a Stalinist hand through his brutal secret police, the Securitate. Ceausescu established an autocracy blending communism, nationalism and a pervasive cult of personality. Like other Eastern European nations, Romania experienced economic decline in the 1980s. However, Ceausescu's own policies contributed to the erosion of the Romanian standard of living. Unrest grew steadily during the mid-1980s. When Ceausescu ordered government troops to fire on protesters on 17 December 1989, he signed his own death warrant. Ceausescu and his wife, Elena, fled the capital of Bucharest, but they were captured and executed on live television on Christmas Day. More than 1,100 people died during the ensuing Romanian Revolution.



■ Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev addresses the United Nations in December 1988 to announce a new era of superpower co-operation



# REDRAWING THE MAP OF EUROPE

Once the movements for freedom and independence gained momentum, the downfall of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc occurred with lightning swiftness. In the Soviet Union, the dismemberment of the communist colossus began within the fringe republics, where nationalism and ethnic identity had simmered for more than 50 years under Moscow's central authority. Russian territory was reduced to its 17th century frontiers. New nations ousted communist sympathisers, organised governments, negotiated boundaries, and exerted unprecedented status among the world's nations. The former Soviet republics achieved autonomy, and the Russian Federation assumed the former Soviet seat on the United Nations Security Council.

## EPICENTRE OF REVOLUTION

After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the reunification of Germany was accomplished with great speed and the cooperation of the Soviet Union. In 1990, East and West Germany were united after half a century. Germany later became a member of the NATO alliance, while Gorbachev acknowledged that the German people should be allowed to make their own political decisions.

**GERMANY**

**SWITZERLAND**

## GROUNDBREAKING SUMMIT IN GENEVA

In November 1985, President Ronald Reagan and Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev met for the first of four landmark summit conferences to discuss limitations on nuclear and conventional arms and opportunities to improve diplomatic relations. The foundation for cooperative exchange that facilitated the end of the Cold War was laid during the Geneva Summit.





### FORMER SOVIET SEAT OF POWER

Discord rocked the Kremlin in the summer of 1991, and a failed coup d'etat by communist hardliners hastened the decline of the Soviet Union. The power base of Soviet General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev was further eroded by the unrest, while several republics had already declared independence. By the end of the year, the Soviet Union had ceased to exist.

## RUSSIA

### BRUTAL REGIME BROUGHT DOWN

Led by President Nicolae Ceausescu, the communist government of Romania, the most repressive regime of the Soviet dominated Eastern Bloc, was toppled in a swift, violent revolution in late 1989 and early 1990. Ceausescu and his wife were tried, convicted, and shot by firing squad in televised proceedings on December 25, 1989.

## ROMANIA

### CENTRAL ASIAN AUTONOMY

By the end of 1991, the vast territory of the Soviet Union was rapidly divided along ethnic and territorial lines as new nations emerged. In Central Asia, the nations of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, and Kazakhstan were among the newly created countries whose governments faced civil unrest and economic uncertainty.



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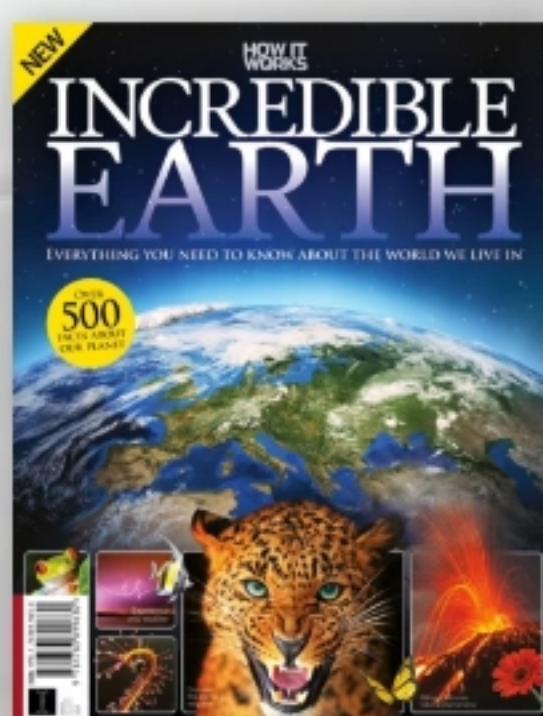
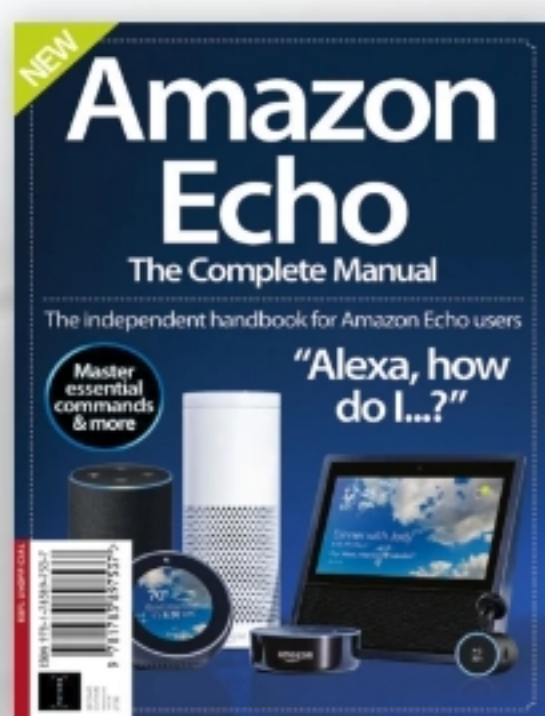
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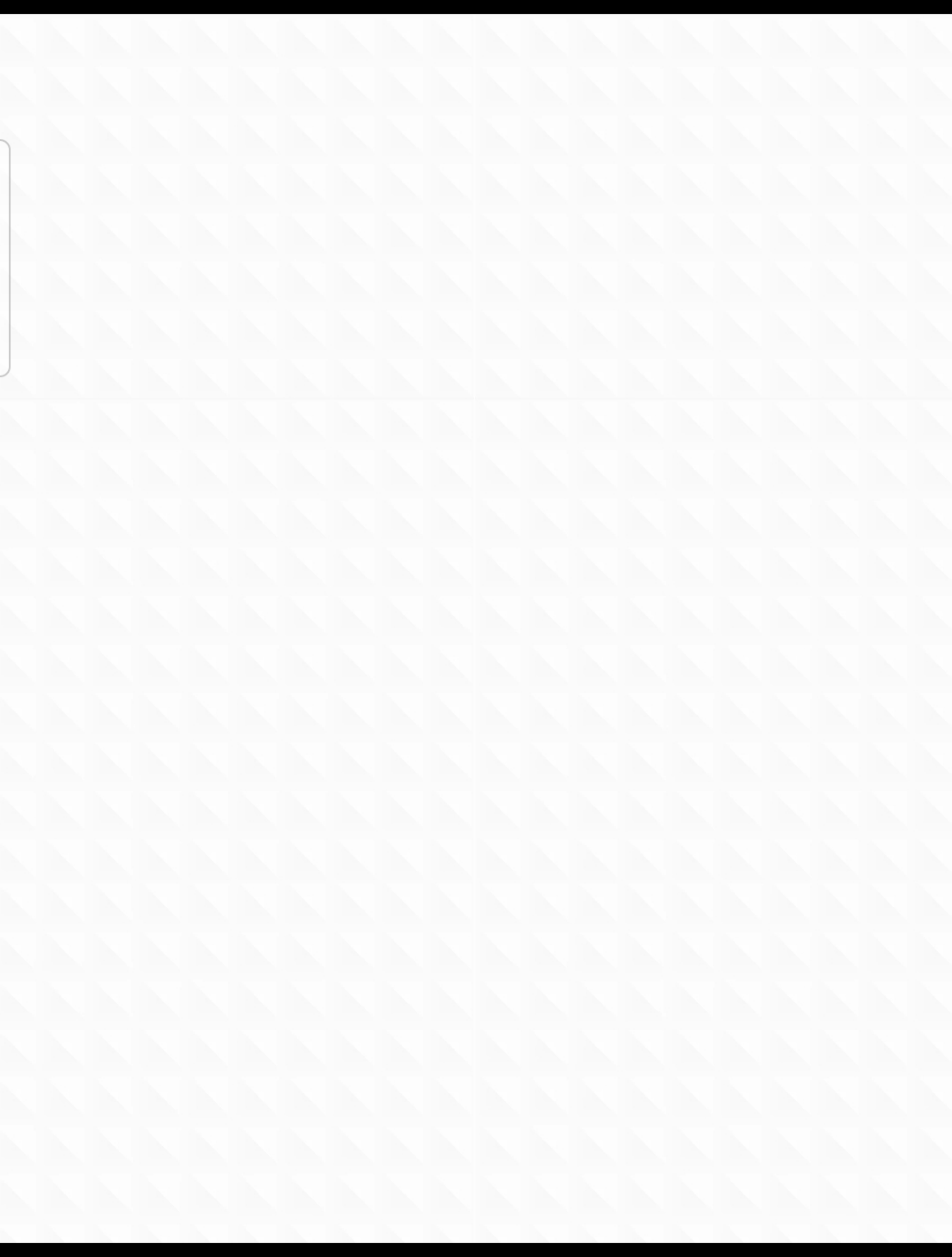
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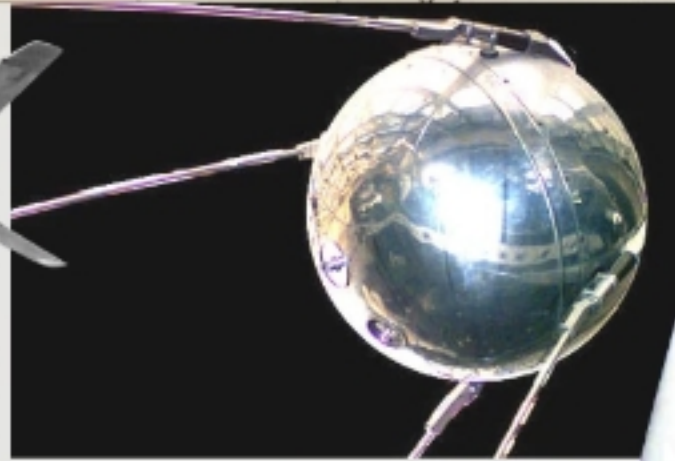
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